ELLERY QUEEN

THE WORLD'S LEADING MYSTERY MAGAZINE

MAR. 1984
$1.75

43rd ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

11 NE[W] STO[RIES]

H. R. [illegible]TEIG
LILLIA[N] de la TORRE
GWEN[DOLYN] NEBEL BUTLER
ROBE[RT] VOLTY
ELIZA[BETH] FERRARS
EDWA[RD] D. HOCH

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

42 PLOTS TO SUSPENSE,

6981 $6.95 | 8698 $14.95 | 7641 $14.95 | 7567 $9.95 | 7039 $13.50 | 0687 $20.00 | 7328.$16.95

0547 $12.95

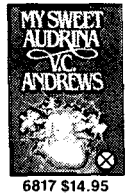
0554 Spec. ed.

6536 $12.95

6734 $13.95

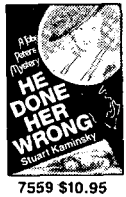
6791 $13.95

6809 $14.50



6817 $14.95

4713 Spec. ed.



7559 $10.95

6866 Spec. ed.

7252 $14.95

7054 $10.95

6874 $15.95

7286 Spec. ed

6 BOOKS FOR 99¢
with membership

Values up to $117.15 in Publishers' Editions!

How The Mystery Guild works: Get 6 exciting books for 99¢ (plus shipping and handling) PLUS a *free* tote bag when accepted as a member. We reserve the right to reject any application. However, once accepted as a member, if you are not satisfied, return the books at Club expense within 10 days. Your membership will be cancelled and you'll owe nothing.

Big selection, big savings! About every 4 weeks (14 times a year), you'll get the Club bulletin describing the 2 featured Selections and Alternates. Plus, up to 4 times a year, you may receive offers of special Selections—all at discounts off publishers' prices. To get the 2 featured Selections, do nothing; they'll be shipped automatically. If you prefer an Alternate or no book at all, return the form provided with your preference by the date specified. That date allows you 10 days to decide. If you have less than 10 days and get an unwanted Selection, return it at Club expense and owe nothing. A shipping and handling charge is added to all shipments.

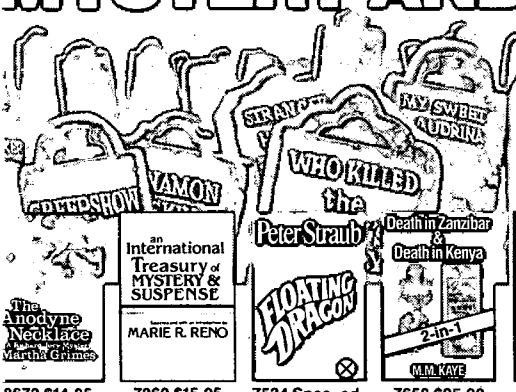
Easy purchase plan! You need buy only 4 books at regular low Club prices during your first year of membership; then continue to enjoy Club benefits without obligation or resign at any time. The Mystery Guild offers its own complete, hardbound editions, sometimes altered in size to fit special presses and save you even more.

Club editions save you up to 60% off publishers' list prices quoted above.

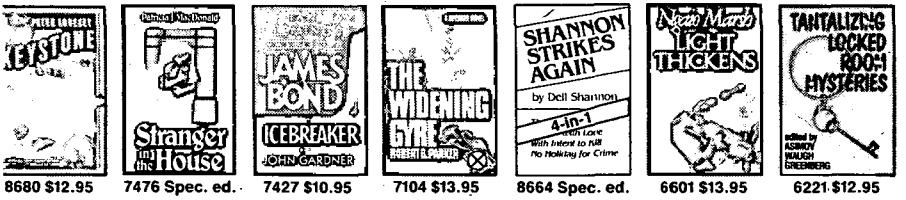
⊗ Explicit sex, violence, and language.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

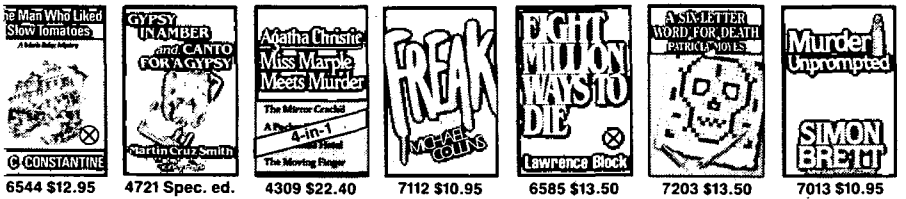
FILL YOUR NIGHTS WITH MYSTERY AND MURDER.


Experience the haunting horror of the great masters of mystery!
WHO KILLED the Peter Straub?
FLOATING DRAGON
Death in Zanzibar & Death in Kenya
2-in-1
M.M. KAYE
THE DELTA STAR
Joseph Wambaugh
THE BURGLAR WHO PAINTED LIKE MONDRIAN
Lawrence Block
John D. MacDonald
THE GOOD OLD STUFF
an International Treasury of MYSTERY & SUSPENSE
MARIE R. RENO
The Anodyne Necklace

8672 $14.95 | 7260 $15.95 | 7534 Spec. ed. | 7658 $25.90 | 7344 $15.95 | 7542 $14.50 | 6460 $14.95

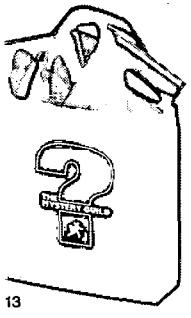


8680 $12.95 | 7476 Spec. ed. | 7427 $10.95 | 7104 $13.95 | 8664 Spec. ed. | 6601 $13.95 | 6221 $12.95



6544 $12.95 | 4721 Spec. ed. | 4309 $22.40 | 7112 $10.95 | 6585 $13.50 | 7203 $13.50 | 7013 $10.95

FREE TOTE BAG with membership



THE MYSTERY GUILD®

Dept. ER-623, Garden City, N.Y. 11530

Please accept my application for membership in The Mystery Guild and send me the 6 books indicated below. Bill me only 99¢ (plus shipping and handling). I understand that I need buy only 4 books at regular low Club prices during the first year of my membership to complete my commitment. My membership will be subject to the terms and conditions presented in this ad.

No-risk guarantee: If not delighted after examining my 6 selections, I may return the books within 10 days at Club expense. My membership will be cancelled and I will owe nothing. I may keep the tote bag.

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	

Mr.
Ms. _____
(Please print)

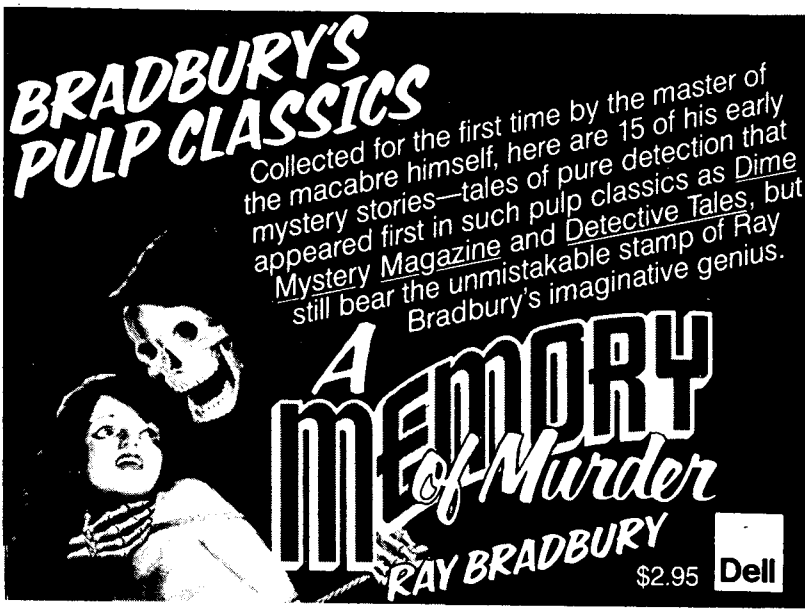
Address _____ Apt. No. _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Members accepted in U.S.A. and Canada only. Canadian members will be serviced from Canada. Offer slightly different in Canada.

35-MG95

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED


BRADBURY'S
PULP CLASSICS
Collected for the first time by the master of the macabre himself, here are 15 of his early mystery stories—tales of pure detection that appeared first in such pulp classics as Dime Mystery Magazine and Detective Tales, but still bear the unmistakable stamp of Ray Bradbury's imaginative genius.
A MEMORY of Murder
RAY BRADBURY
$2.95
Dell

DETECTIVERSE

I.R.S. IRE

by LILLIAN de la TORRE

The head of the mob, Al Capone,
Thought that his crimes were unknown,
But the I.R.S. nailed him,
His false return jailed him.
Moral: Don't cheat on your own.

© 1984 by Lillian de la Torre.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WORLD'S LEADING MYSTERY MAGAZINE

ELLERY QUEEN®

6 **The Theft of the Overdue Library Book** / Edward D. Hoch

26 **Fly, Said the Spy** / Elizabeth Ferrars

40 **The Barking Dogs of Roca Torre** / Madelyn DeLorier

47 **Forged Laughter** / William Bankier

58 **The House on Marigold Hill** / Randye Lordon

64 **The Kidnapp'd Earl** / Lillian de la Torre

89 **Time Bomb** / Gwendoline Butler

95 **Adam and Eve on a Raft** / Ron Goulart

110 **The Photographer and the Sailor** / James Holding

120 **Teeth Like Little Radios** / Robert Twohy

133 **Murder Must Not At All Advertise, Isn't It?** / H. R. F. Keating

80 **Mystery Newsletter** / R. E. Porter & Chris Steinbrunner

86 **The Jury Box** / Allen J. Hubin

Note: indicia on page 161

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* Nick Velvet story by

EDWARD D. HOCH

"Could you steal a library book for me?" Tony Wilde asked Nick.

"You hardly need to pay me twenty-five thousand for that," Nick told him. "You just stick it under your coat and walk out of the place. Unless they've got one of these new alarm systems with a magnetic strip inside the book."

"My problem is that the book isn't in the library. It's overdue and I have no way of finding out who has it."

We wonder what James Holding's library cop Hal Johnson would think of these shenanigans . . .

THE THEFT OF THE OVERDUE LIBRARY BOOK

by EDWARD D. HOCH

The man on the telephone was named Fingers O'Toole, and Nick Velvet had done a few jobs for him over the years. "How are you, Fingers? How's business?"

"Frankly, it could be better, Nick. I'm in a bit of a bind."

"Can I help you out?"

There was hesitation on the other end of the line. "Is this phone safe?"

"If your end's safe, my end's safe," Nick assured him.

"Look, I want you to steal a person for me."

"That sounds like kidnaping. I don't do anything like that."

"Come on, Nick, you stole a whole baseball team once! And a jury!"

"Groups of people are different," Nick explained. "It doesn't seem like kidnaping when there are a dozen people involved. But tell me a little more. Who do you want stolen?"

© 1984 by Edward D. Hoch.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Tony Wilde."

"The restaurant owner?"

"That's him. Can you do it?"

"You're going to hold him for ransom, right?"

"Well, I'm going to hold him till I get something out of him, sure."

"Sorry, Fingers. Count me out. First of all, I don't steal anything of value and Tony Wilde is something of value. Secondly, he's an old friend of mine."

"If you won't do it, someone else will, Nick."

"Tony Wilde can take care of himself. It would be next to impossible to kidnap him."

"I know somebody who specializes in impossible things. Sure you won't give it a try, Nick?"

"Sorry, Fingers," he said and hung up.

It was a warm afternoon in May and Nick went out in the backyard where Gloria was planting some new rose bushes. "Who was on the phone, Nicky?" she asked.

"Business."

"A job?"

"No. I turned him down."

She stood up, brushing the dirt from her hands. "You look worried."

"Not really. It was just something he said, something about knowing a person who specializes in impossible things. I heard that once before."

Gloria remembered, too. "Sandra Paris, the White Queen."

He nodded. "*Impossible things before breakfast.* That was her motto."

"Do you think she's out of prison?"

"I guess I'd better find out."

Nick telephoned a politician he knew in southern New Jersey. "Marty, this is Nick Velvet. I've got a question for you."

"Good to hear from you, Nick. What's the question?"

"How much time do you get for stealing a roulette wheel in your state?"

Marty chuckled. "Thinking of coming down to Atlantic City?"

"I was already there—last year. Someone I know got into a little trouble."

"Well, a roulette wheel would be grand larceny. It would depend

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on their previous record, prior convictions and such. Give me a name and I'll check it for you."

"Sandra Paris. Atlantic City, about thirteen months ago."

"I'll call you back, Nick."

Thirty minutes later he phoned to report that Sandra Paris had drawn a one-year sentence and had been paroled after eight months.

"She's out," Nick told Gloria.

"Stay away from her, Nicky. She's trouble."

"I just don't like her taking my clients away."

"You didn't want the job anyway."

"Of course not! Tony Wilde is an old friend. I might even take a run out to see him and drop him a friendly warning."

"He lives in Chicago!"

"I can fly out tomorrow and be back the next day. It would be good to see Tony again."

"Can't you just phone him?"

"Not after all these years, Gloria. I just want to have dinner with him and give him a casual warning about Fingers O'Toole."

"Well, if you're flying to Chicago so am I," she decided. "There's an old school chum in Oak Park I've been dying to visit. She lives in a house designed by Frank Lloyd Wright."

There was no talking her out of it. The following afternoon they were both on a plane to Chicago.

Tony Wilde was delighted to hear Nick's voice and immediately invited him to dinner at his downtown supper club, The Wilde Spot. "Is Gloria with you?" he asked.

"Yes, but she's dining with an old friend."

"Pity. Give her my love, Nick."

Seeing Tony after such a long time brought back memories of Nick's Army days when they were both kids just out of school, catching the tail end of the Korean War and making plans for a future they hoped they'd live to see. It hadn't turned out exactly as planned for either of them, Nick decided, remembering how Tony had wanted to be a lawyer.

He was a stocky man with steel-grey hair. As he greeted Nick at the entrance to The Wilde Spot, he had the familiar twinkle in his eye. "Damn good to see you, Nick! What brings you to Chicago?"

"I thought I'd just stop off and see you after all these years." His gaze took in the lobby fountain and the subdued, candlelit dining room beyond. "I couldn't afford this place if I didn't know the owner."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tony gave him a friendly pat on the shoulder. "Go on, Nick. I hear you're pretty successful in your line of work." He led the way to a secluded table where a waiter quickly appeared to take their drink order.

Nick motioned toward a piano and microphone. "You have entertainment, too?"

"A singer comes on at eight. It's atmosphere, you know?" He smiled a bit. "Her voice isn't very good, but she looks great."

They chatted over drinks and the meal that followed—an excellent veal concoction that was one of the house specialties. Nick noticed that the couple at the next table had it, too—and cleaned their plates. Tony told Nick about his recent divorce. Finally, when they were relaxing over dessert, Nick asked, "Do you know a fellow named Fingers O'Toole?"

"O'Toole?" Tony's reply was carefully measured. "I may have heard the name. Why do you ask, Nick?"

"I don't want to involve myself in your personal affairs, Tony, but I'd be a little careful these days if I were you. Just call it a tip from an old friend."

"What is it? Did Fingers put out a contract on me?" Wilde asked, apparently deciding to treat Nick's warning as a joke.

"Not exactly, but you're close. Would it be to his advantage if you were to disappear for a time?"

Tony Wilde stopped smiling. "How much do you know, Nick?"

"Very little. Just that O'Toole tried to hire me."

"To steal what?"

"You."

Tony was silent for a time. Nick watched the waiter bring the check and a doggie bag to the couple at the adjoining table. Finally, Wilde said, "Thank you for telling me, Nick. I've often said that old friends are the best."

"I think he'll hire someone else for the job. If I'm right, you might be especially vulnerable in the morning, before breakfast. What's your daily routine?"

"I assure you I'm quite safe before breakfast. I walk my dog in the park across from my apartment. Bruno's a mean German Shepherd who loves to bite people. He's far more effective than a human bodyguard."

"Still—"

"Look, Nick, I appreciate the warning. But I can take care of myself. As a matter of fact, if you and Gloria are free tomorrow

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

morning I'd like to invite you over for breakfast. You can even walk Bruno with me if you'd like."

"I don't—"

"I may have some business to throw your way."

"I deal only in objects without value," Nick reminded him.

Tony Wilde nodded. "Come by in the morning, and bring Gloria. I'd like to see her again."

Later that evening, back at their hotel, Nick told Gloria about the invitation. "I suppose I should go," she agreed. "How was dinner?"

"The food was excellent, and his restaurant is certainly interesting."

"How do you mean interesting, Nicky?"

"It's the only place I ever saw where the customers take home doggie bags even after they've cleaned their plates."

In the morning they took a cab to Tony Wilde's condominium in a swank section of the city not far from The Wilde Spot. The building was across the street from a large park that covered several acres with tree-shaded paths and a small pond. It was here, Wilde explained after meeting Gloria with an affectionate kiss, that he walked Bruno every morning before breakfast.

The dog started to growl deep in his throat at the first sign of Nick and Gloria. Wilde slid his fingers beneath the dog's collar and scratched him soothingly. "There, there, boy. These are friends."

Once on his leash, Bruno calmed down a bit, and as they entered the park Wilde even allowed Gloria to take over and walk with him. Wilde himself dropped back to talk with Nick. "I told you last night I might have a job for you. Could you steal a library book for me?"

"You hardly need to pay me twenty-five thousand for that, Tony. You just stick it under your coat and walk out of the place. Unless they've got one of these new alarm systems with a magnetic strip inside the book."

"My problem is that the book isn't in the library. It's overdue and I have no way of finding out who has it."

"If it's a valuable first edition or something like that—"

"Lord knows it's not valuable, Nick. It's a cheap hardcover reprint of Hammett's *The Thin Man,* the sort they used to publish back in the 1930s before paperbacks became popular. The paper's beginning to turn brown and I suppose the library will simply discard it before long."

"There are diamonds hidden in the binding," Nick speculated.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Nothing's hidden in it at all. You can take my word for it. But I need it, and I'll pay you your fee to get it for me."

Gloria and Bruno rounded a curve in the path and the German Shepherd turned his head to make certain his master was still behind him. It was obvious he never let Wilde out of his sight on these morning walks, but Nick decided to test it by pulling Tony off the path and behind a tree. Immediately, the dog broke free from Gloria's grip and bounced back, seeking them out and almost bowling Nick over with the ferocity of his charge. Wilde had to call him off as his powerful jaws were about to settle on Nick's wrist.

"Satisfied?" Tony asked.

"I guess so."

"He's the best bodyguard I ever had."

"But not much protection against a bullet fired at you from twenty yards away."

"No one wants to kill me, Nick. They just want a piece of my money."

Gloria joined them as Wilde retrieved the dog's leash. "That beast is a *beast!*" she announced.

Wilde chuckled and calmed the dog down once more. "He's just a loyal friend."

"Tell me more about this book," Nick urged.

"It belongs to our neighborhood branch library across the park. They only have one copy, and none of the other branches or the main library have this particular edition. It's more than a month overdue and the library says there's nothing they can do about it except send overdue notices. They have people who go out and collect overdue books, but that's not going to happen with this one for several more months. I need the book now."

"It should be simple enough, once I find out who has it."

"There's the problem. The library records are computerized. It's not as simple as looking in a file drawer." The path had led them to a small cubical building without windows. The sign on the door read MEN. "If this is unlocked, I usually stop here," Wilde explained. Then, turning to the dog, he commanded, "Sit, Bruno!"

"He's a good dog," Nick observed, following Tony into the men's room. The grey cinder-block building contained a single urinal, a toilet stall, and a sink in a space perhaps ten feet square. The walls were marked with the usual graffiti but otherwise the place was reasonably clean.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I told you so. Man's best friend. He'd wait out there for me all day."

Nick turned on the faucet and washed his hands. "How soon do you need the book?"

"I'd like it by tomorrow night. What do you think?"

"I'll let you know. If I can do it at all I should have it by then."

They emerged to find Gloria and Bruno eyeing each other with mutual distrust. But as soon as he saw Wilde, the dog was on his feet once more, tagging along at his side. "Is there a ladies' restroom in this park somewhere?" Gloria asked.

"Straight ahead." Wilde pointed, indicating a second cinder-block building about a hundred feet ahead of them on the path.

"Go ahead, we'll wait," Nick told her. He glanced around from where they strolled, noting a single telephone booth at the side of a park road about fifty feet directly behind the men's room. It was a good thing to remember.

When Gloria rejoined them, they circled around and left the park from the point where they'd entered it, across the street from Tony Wilde's condominium. He took them upstairs for breakfast, and over scrambled eggs Nick agreed to go after the overdue book. "I can do it," he said with assurance. "It'll just mean staying here a bit longer than we planned."

"Do you want a retainer now?"

"Your money's good," Nick said. "You can pay me on delivery."

Back at their hotel Gloria said, "You're not staying here just to do the job for him, are you, Nicky? You still think the White Queen's going to turn up."

"I don't know if she is or not, but a job's a job. Stealing things like overdue library books is what people pay me to do."

"Why do you think he wants that book, especially if there's nothing hidden in it?"

"We'll probably find out sooner or later."

"What am I supposed to do while you're out finding that book?"

"I have a job for you," Nick said. "I want you to follow Tony Wilde."

"What for? I'm certainly no bodyguard!"

"I just want to make sure nothing happens to him—because he's an old friend and because he's going to owe us twenty-five thousand dollars very shortly."

"If it's the White Queen, she'll go after him in the morning. Remember? Impossible things before breakfast?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I know," Nick agreed. "But I want you to be seen. If there's anyone else watching him I want them to know you're around. It might just be enough to scare them off, at least while we're in town."

Gloria took some persuading, but finally she agreed to keep an eye on Tony. "But what if something *does* happen? What'll I do?"

"Phone me. I'll manage to let you know where I can be reached most of the time."

He spent the rest of the day at the library branch, watching the operation of the computerized checkout system. When he first arrived there shortly before noon, he'd taken the direct approach, asking for the book in the hope it had been returned. But it was still overdue. Next he asked if its location could be traced. It was very important, he insisted, and offered the girl behind the counter a five-dollar tip. She promised to see what she could do, and returned in five minutes with a triumphant smile. "Here you are, sir. We have another edition of *The Thin Man,* in large print. I'm sure it will serve your purpose."

Nick started to protest, then he saw it was hopeless and accepted the book, taking it to a corner of the reading room.

As he studied the library's operations, he learned that each book now carried a barcode, much like those on food items at the supermarket. When a patron checked a book out, it was checked with a light pen, which registered the book's identification number along with the number of the borrower's library card. Nick thought about this for some time, then finally went to the card catalogue to look up the number assigned to *The Thin Man* in the edition he needed. But it was an up-to-date library and instead of a card catalogue he found himself confronted by a microfiche reader.

In a moment, however, he had what he wanted. And he thought he knew how he could discover the location of the book he'd been hired to steal.

That evening over dinner, Gloria reported that Tony Wilde had gone down to his supper club around noon and stayed till two o'clock, then driven to the Chicago public market, apparently to buy some choice cuts of beef for the restaurant. When he'd returned to The Wilde Spot for the evening, Gloria decided it was safe to abandon the tail.

"So that was my day," she concluded. "Boring. How about you? Did you get the book?"

"Not yet. Tomorrow."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Do you still want me to watch him in the morning?"

"Of course. As you said yourself, if it's the White Queen, she'll go after him in the morning."

"While he's walking his dog."

"Exactly." He copied down a phone number from his notebook. "Here's what I want you to do. I'll be at the library at seven-thirty—"

"Do they open that early?"

He ignored the question and went on. "This is their phone number. I want you to call me there from the park. You'll see a pay phone by the road behind the men's restroom where Wilde stopped this morning. Today we reached there at just about seven-thirty, and I assume he walks the dog at the same time every day. Call me whether or not Wilde stops in the restroom, and I'll cross over from the library and meet you in the park."

"Why do I need to phone you if you're so sure of the time I'll be there?"

"Trust me," Nick said.

In the morning he was up early, shaking Gloria awake and reminding her she should be at Wilde's place by seven in case he walked the dog a bit earlier than usual. It was six-thirty when he left the hotel and drove his rented car to an all-night supermarket in one of the residential sections near the library. There he walked quickly up and down a couple of aisles, inspecting the barcode labels on the items until he found three that would serve his purpose. Happily, most barcodes included a digital translation directly beneath. He paid for the items and returned to his car.

It was growing light as he worked, though the dawn sky was cloudy with the threat of rain. The microfiche catalogue-listing for Hammett's *The Thin Man* in the edition Wilde needed gave its number as 4-2222-00003-3522. Nick cut away at the barcodes on the products he'd purchased and taped them together to form the number he needed. Then he drove on to the library.

It was a modern building, open only a few years, and he was stunned that a place with the latest in computers should have such a primitive alarm system. He was inside within five minutes, moving across the familiar carpeting of the main reading room to the book-return desk. He seated himself at the computer terminal and flipped the switch to turn it on. Then he picked up the light pen which served as the machine's optical scanner and passed it over the home-made barcode strip.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At once the terminal screen came alive with the book's author, title, publisher, edition, and publication date, followed by a call number and shelf location. Below this was a list of borrowers, identified by number. Nick studied the final number for some time, wondering what he should do next. He decided he needed help.

In a desk drawer, he found a printed instruction-sheet giving the proper access code for identifying library borrowers. He typed in the necessary words and followed them with the borrower's number. At once the screen supplied the information he needed: Norman Wells, 503 Scott Street.

"What in hell are you doing here?" a gruff voice asked in surprise.

Nick froze at the computer terminal. He'd been so intent on the machine he hadn't heard anyone enter the library. He glanced quickly at his watch as he turned with a smile. It was 7:32. "I'm checking out all the computer terminals for the manufacturer," he explained. "We've had some malfunctions."

The man had a face that went well with his voice. "Nobody told *me* about it. We're not having any trouble. How'd you get in here, anyway, and what are you doing here at seven-thirty in the morning?"

"I've got a lot of terminals to check today. I had to get an early start. This is the first one."

"A lot of terminals? There are only two branches automated so far in the entire city!"

"Not just libraries. The commodities exchange uses this same model."

"Well, I'd just better check up on this."

"If you'll wait a few minutes, the director's secretary will be phoning me here. You know Miss Fritz, don't you?"

"Who? Yes, yes, I guess I know her," the man answered.

At that moment the telephone rang. Nick scooped it up before the man could reach it. "Nicky? This is Gloria. I'm at the booth in the park. Tony Wilde just went into the men's room and that beast is waiting outside."

"Yes, Miss Fritz, I'm glad you phoned."

"What? Nicky, it's me—Gloria!"

"I know, Miss Fritz. I have a gentleman here who wants to speak with you. Can you tell him that I'm authorized to be here, checking the computer terminals for malfunctions?"

"Oh! Sure," she said, finally catching on. Nick passed the receiver to the gruff-voiced man.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He accepted the phone gingerly. "Hello? Miss Fritz? This man— Yes, I see. But it's a bit early in the day— All right, I just want to make sure everything's in order."

He hung up and Nick turned off the terminal. "This machine's perfect. I hope all the rest work as well. Thanks for your cooperation, Mr.—"

"Jennings," the man supplied. "But I still don't understand how you got in here."

"Miss Fritz gave me a key."

"Oh."

"Goodbye now." Nick hurried toward the front door.

"What was she doing at work so early?"

"She came in early to phone me," Nick said, and then he was through the front door and out of there before Jennings could think of another question.

He drove into the park and left his car a short distance from the men's restroom. Even at a distance, he could see Gloria and Bruno eyeing each other again and he wondered why she'd gotten that close. "Where's Tony?" he asked when he joined her.

"Still inside. What was that business on the phone? You almost got caught, didn't you? Is that why you had me call?"

"It was a safety measure in case I needed it. And I did." He glanced at the dog. "How long has Wilde been in there?"

"About ten minutes. He went in just before I phoned you."

"I think I'll see what's keeping him."

The dog glanced up at him as Nick walked past him and opened the door of the cinder-block building. "Tony?" he called out. "Are you in there?"

Silence.

He stepped inside and looked around the tiny space. There was no one at the urinal or sink. He pushed open the door of the toilet stall and that was empty, too. He glanced up at the solid wooden ceiling, as unbroken as the slab of concrete beneath his feet. One door and no windows. Yet Tony Wilde had vanished.

Then he saw the little calling card propped against one of the faucets on the sink. It read simply:

THE WHITE QUEEN
Impossible Things Before Breakfast

It wasn't until Gloria had a look inside the place herself that she

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was willing to accept Nick's report that Tony Wilde had truly vanished. Then she simply stood there shaking her head. "It's impossible, Nicky, he can't be gone!"

"It's not impossible at all. He probably never entered this place to start with. You were off to one side—you thought he came in here, but he didn't."

"I didn't *think* anything!" she snapped, her temper up. "I was right outside. I saw him tell Bruno to sit, just like yesterday morning, and then push the door open and come in. I saw the door close after him."

"You couldn't be mistaken?"

"Not a chance. I was only on the phone with you for about two minutes, and Tony was in here all that time. Then I went back out and stood not twenty feet from the door. He never came out."

"Well, he certainly didn't get out through the plumbing. And the ceiling, floor, and walls are all solid. There's noplace to hide in here, except maybe behind the door of the toilet stall, and he's not there. He wasn't behind the outside door when I entered, either. I felt it hit the wall when I pushed it open. And you were still outside—you would have seen him."

"Should we call the police?" Gloria asked.

"And tell them what? That a lady thief called the White Queen stole a man from a men's room in the park while you and his faithful dog were on guard outside? They'd laugh in our faces, not to mention ask a lot of embarrassing questions about my business with him."

"Then what do we do? What do we do with Bruno, to start with?"

Nick reached out and carefully picked up the German Shepherd's leash. "We'll leave him with the doorman in Tony's building."

The doorman, a white-haired man named Fred, was willing to take the dog when Nick told him they'd found Bruno alone in the park. "He must have gotten separated from his master," Nick said. "We saw the name and address on his collar, so we brought him back."

"I can't understand that," Fred told them. "The dog never ran away from him before. What's the matter, Bruno?" He carefully patted the dog's neck. Bruno let out a sudden bark. "Collar too tight?" Fred loosened the dog's collar and Bruno quieted down. "Good dog," the doorman said.

"You'll keep him for Mr. Wilde?" Nick asked. "He's a friend of ours."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Sure, I remember seeing him with you yesterday. Don't worry, I'll take care of Bruno."

They left him and walked back to where Nick had left the car in the park. "What now?" Gloria asked.

"We look for Sandra Paris. And we look for Fingers O'Toole because that's who she's working for."

"What about the book you're supposed to steal?"

"First I'd better find my client. The book can come later."

They spent the rest of the day checking local hotels, but neither O'Toole nor Sandra Paris were registered under their own names. Every hour Gloria tried calling Wilde at his apartment and at the supper club, but he hadn't returned.

Nick called O'Toole's New York number but there was no answer there, either. "What do you think they want him for?" Gloria wondered.

"I don't know. I don't even know if O'Toole wanted his presence or merely his absence. Maybe Tony was going to do something or be somewhere and they wanted to stop him."

In the afternoon they went back to the park, back to the men's restroom where it had happened. But there was nothing to be found. Nick had Gloria inspect the ladies' restroom as well, though it was some distance down the path. "Are you sure there's nothing you forgot?" he asked her. "Is it possible he came out the roof somehow while you were phoning me?"

"You think I wouldn't have seen him? You think the dog wouldn't have caused an uproar? Nicky, he walked through the door—that one and only door—and he never came out."

"Come on," Nick said, depressed. "I'll take you out to dinner."

"Where?"

"Where else? The Wilde Spot, of course."

At the restaurant Nick was simply told that Tony Wilde was away. The waiters were as efficient as they had been on the first night, but there was an undertone of uncertainty about the place.

"The food is great," Gloria said, finishing her veal. "Tony must make a fortune here."

"I suspect he does," Nick murmured. He called the waiter over and said, "We'd like a doggie bag, please."

The waiter gestured at their plates. "But you have nothing to put in a doggie bag, sir."

"You know what I mean." Nick winked as he said it.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The waiter hesitated and then said, "You must mean the special-dessert menu, sir. It's not available tonight. You must come when Mr. Wilde himself is here."

"But I'm a close friend of Mr. Wilde. I dined with him here two nights ago. We sat at that corner table."

"I remember you, sir, but—"

"He told me to be sure to ask for the special-dessert menu the next time I was in."

"Well, I suppose it would be all right." The waiter went off and returned after a few moments with a menu. Nick opened it and looked down the list of cakes, pies, and ice creams, thinking for a moment there had been some misunderstanding. Then he found it, on a separate page, in light type, clinging to an end paper:

Not for Consumption on Premises
(Please order by number)

101. Famous marijuana brownies (serves two), $25
102. Hashish cake (full size), $75
103. Apple custard pie, dusted with cocaine, $100
104. Frozen ginger cream with dilute LSD, $80
105. Marijuana mousse, $50
106. Gingerbread with powdered opium, $65

There were twenty-five items on the list in all, and Nick read them with growing astonishment. He had to admit that Tony Wilde had a great imagination when it came to finding new marketing techniques for tried-and-true products. "Just number 101," he told the waiter, handing back the menu.

"Very good, sir."

"What are you getting now?" Gloria asked.

"A take-out surprise for later."

It was eight o'clock, and as Nick accepted the doggie bag and paid the bill, the piano started playing. A slightly husky female voice began singing an old Cole Porter melody. He turned in his chair to look at her. She had platinum-blonde hair and was wearing a sequined evening gown. As Tony had said, her voice wasn't very good but she looked great.

It was Sandra Paris, the White Queen.

Nick gave Gloria the doggie bag and the key to the car. "I'll see you at the hotel," he said. "I have to speak with her."

"Nicky, remember the last time!"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The last time she went to jail and I collected my fee. I'd like this to be a repeat performance."

"I don't trust any woman who looks like that."

"Don't worry. I'll be back in an hour."

He waited until Sandra Paris took her break and then approached the piano. "Remember me?"

She turned her head just a trifle and he saw again at close range the pale innocence of her face. "Nick Velvet, all the way out here in Chicago!"

"I get around. But then, so do you. I never thought you'd be frequenting men's rooms in public parks."

She smiled as she gathered up her music. "Oh, you found my card."

"Where's Tony Wilde?"

"In a safe place. He won't be harmed."

"How did you do it, Sandra?"

"Professional secret, Nick."

"How long is O'Toole holding him?"

She didn't answer right away. Instead she started to walk away and Nick tagged along. "How much do you know?" she asked at last.

"Enough. Fingers wanted me for the job first."

"I always seem to get your cast-offs, don't I?"

"How was prison, Sandra? Want to go back again?"

She shook her head. "I won't be going back again. I learned a few things since Atlantic City."

"Let me buy you a drink and we'll talk about it."

"I have another set in fifteen minutes."

"That's time enough. How'd you land this job, anyway?"

"The regular girl was persuaded to be sick for a week. I'm filling in."

"Why?"

She shrugged. "To keep an eye on Tony. I figured he'd rather be kidnaped by a familiar face."

They slid onto padded bar stools and she ordered white wine. "You know what he does here?" Nick asked.

"Sure. Have you tried the mousse? It's great."

"O'Toole wants a cut of it, doesn't he?"

"The damn fool wants to franchise the idea! Can you believe it? He says if all his restaurant-owner friends started offering it, with a percentage off the top to him, he could retire."

Nick shook his head. "Fingers is going to end up dead."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Sure, but I don't question my clients. I just take the money and do the job."

"How much are you getting for this one, Sandra?"

"Fifty, plus my pay for singing here this week. I always wanted to be a singer."

"That's twice as much as I get for a job."

She shrugged her bare shoulders. "I have people to pay out of my share."

"So Fingers is holding him till he agrees to this crazy scheme?"

"Not exactly. Wilde has a big shipment of his raw material coming in any day now. Fingers plans to intercept it. Then it really won't matter if Tony agrees or not."

"Then why did he need to kidnap him?"

"Fingers intercepted a message about the shipment, but it's in some sort of code, he can't read it. That's why he needs Tony—when Tony tells him what it says, he'll be a free man."

Nick was remembering the library book. "I think I might have something you want," he said slowly. "When can we get together?"

"You mean with Tony Wilde?"

Nick nodded. "I want him free."

"That's Fingers' business, not mine."

"Get Fingers and get Wilde, and we'll meet tomorrow morning—around eleven. O.K.?"

"I'm not promising anything, Nick." She finished her wine and stood up. "I have to get back to the piano."

"That was just grandstanding this morning," he said. "You could have taken Tony right off the path, without any impossibilities."

She smiled at him. "I saw you and Gloria with him yesterday morning. I knew one of you would be back today, so I thought I'd show you how the pros do it."

"Call me tomorrow morning, Sandra, or I'll try a bit of grandstanding myself."

She smiled and strolled back to the piano. As he left, she was starting to sing another song.

When he got back to the hotel Gloria was already in bed. "Nicky, what was in those brownies?"

"Go to sleep. I'll tell you in the morning."

Norman Wells lived in a small, single-family house a few blocks from the library. It was shortly after nine o'clock when Nick arrived and rang his bell. A pleasant middle-aged woman answered.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I'm looking for Norman Wells."

"That's my son. He's in school. What's he done now?"

"Nothing serious, Mrs. Wells—just kept a library book overdue."

"His room is full of books. I'm surprised it's only one."

"Well, there may be more, but the one I was sent after is *The Thin Man* by Dashiell Hammett. Do you think you could find it for me?"

"Oh, I couldn't find anything in that room of his. You'll have to come back when he's home."

"It's very important. Do you think I could just have a peek in his room to see if I could spot it?"

"Well, I don't know—"

"I'd hate to have the library turn it over to the police."

"The police! Oh, I suppose we could take a look."

His room on the second floor was cluttered with football pennants, old and new sneakers, and an assortment of books from the public and high-school libraries. "He likes mysteries," Nick observed.

She agreed. "Those and horror stories. He reads them all the time, but right now it's the baseball season and he doesn't get so much reading done. That's probably why he forgot to return the books."

A few minutes later, Nick held up the book in triumph. "Here it is!"

"Well, I'm really sorry about this," Mrs. Wells said.

"Don't worry. Just tell him to get any other overdue books back to us as soon as possible."

"He'll have them back tonight, believe me."

At the door, Nick stopped and handed her a ten-dollar bill. "Tell Norman this is for his library fines. I know how it is. I was young once, too."

"Why, what a sweet thing!"

Back at the hotel, Gloria told him, "She called about ten minutes ago. Here's her number."

"Good. We're rolling now."

"Did you get the book?"

"Right here."

"Why do you think it's so valuable to him?"

"Book code. His contacts used a copy of this edition. Something happened to his and he was using the library's one and only copy. Then it got borrowed and never returned, and Tony was in trouble. The other editions have the pages numbered differently, and he

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

couldn't use them to read the message. He was getting desperate because the stuff's due in any day now."

"Drugs?"

Nick grinned at her. "Couldn't you tell from those brownies?" He dialed the number Sandra Paris had left and heard her familiar voice on the other end. "Nick Velvet here. You called?"

"I called, but it's no dice. Fingers won't trade him for anything you have, unless it's the shipment."

"Look, meet me in the park in thirty minutes. By the men's room."

"What for?"

"I still think we can work this out."

When he hung up, Gloria asked, "Where are you going now?"

"To meet the White Queen."

He was at the park in twenty minutes, but Sandra Paris was there ahead of him, seated on a bench halfway between the two restrooms. She looked at the book he carried in one hand. "What's that?"

"The key to the code. Want it?"

Sandra tossed her blonde mane. "It means nothing to me. I've been paid and tonight is my last as a singer, whatever happens."

"Tell me where Fingers is hiding him."

"Not a chance."

"Then tell me how he disappeared from that men's room."

Her eyes twinkled with something like pride in her work. "That's got you bothered, hasn't it? He walked through that door, the only door, and Gloria and his faithful pet waited outside. He never came out and yet there's nowhere he could have gone."

"Suppose I could figure out how you did it. Then would you tell me where he was?"

"Forget it. You'll never figure this one out in a hundred years."

"I thought you were a gambler after Atlantic City, Sandra. Give me a crack at solving it. If I'm right, you take me to him. If I'm wrong, I give you this book and you can sell it to Fingers for another fifty."

Her eyes dropped to the book, weighing the possibilities. His mention of cash had obviously interested her. "How much time would I have to give you?"

"Ten seconds."

She laughed and slapped his hand to seal the bet. "You're on! All right, ten seconds—how did I do it?"

Nick smiled and said five words . . .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When Fingers O'Toole turned, startled at his sudden entrance, Nick held up his hand.

"No gunplay, Fingers. I don't want trouble."

"How the hell did you find me? Did Sandra—?"

Nick could see Fingers was determined to make trouble. He crossed the room quickly and hit him on the jaw, sending him backward over a low coffee table. He knelt to remove the holstered revolver on Fingers' belt, then went into the back bedroom to find Tony Wilde handcuffed to a brass bed. "Hello, Tony," Nick said. "Sorry to have taken so long. I'll get the key to those cuffs."

That evening, Nick was once again Tony's guest at The Wilde Spot. Gloria was with them, demanding explanations. "How did you disappear from that restroom when I was outside watching?" she asked Tony.

He smiled. "Since the White Queen isn't here to tell you, I think Nick should explain."

"I told Sandra I could solve it—and I did, in just five words. We had a sort of bet—the book against Tony's hiding place. She was quite gracious about it—took me right to the door of O'Toole's house before she headed for the airport."

"What were the five words?" Gloria asked.

"*It was a different dog.*"

"What?"

"It was a different dog. The first time we saw Tony with Bruno, I remember he calmed the dog by sliding his fingers beneath the collar and rubbing him. But yesterday, after Tony's disappearance, the doorman wondered if his collar was too tight. Had Bruno's neck gotten bigger in a single night? No, Sandra Paris saw the dog with Tony, probably even took instant photographs of him, and obtained an identical German Shepherd with the same coloring."

"But Tony must have known the difference," Gloria insisted.

"It was still Bruno when Tony left the house with him. It was still Bruno when Tony told him to wait outside the restroom. But then Tony stepped through the door and found the White Queen waiting for him, dressed as a man in case someone else entered. She knocked him out with a quick injection and then opened the door, firing a tranquilizer dart into Bruno. A couple of hired cohorts brought in the substitute German Shepherd to take Bruno's place and carried Tony and Bruno away.

"You were on the phone to me. Remember, the booth was directly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

behind the restroom and so for two minutes you couldn't see what was happening out front. That was all the time they needed. Sandra removed Bruno's collar and put it on the new dog, getting it a bit tight rather than risk buckling it into a different hole that might be noticed. Then they all vanished into the trees while you came back to wait with the dog."

"What if I hadn't phoned you, Nicky?"

"I asked Sandra that. She was prepared to kidnap you, too, if necessary—along with any other early-morning strollers who happened along. But the whole thing went off exactly as she'd hoped, creating a nice impossible disappearance. We should have realized it wasn't the same dog, of course. Bruno was far less aggressive than he'd been the previous day."

"What happened to Fingers O'Toole?"

"I told Nick to let him go," Wilde said. "He's made a lot of enemies in organized crime, and this caper won't help him any."

"What about the book?" Gloria asked.

"My contacts telegraphed me about shipments using a book code from this edition of *The Thin Man*," Wilde explained. "My copy got left with my ex-wife when we divorced, and I was temporarily using the library copy. I wish Nick hadn't been so generous in offering it to Sandra Paris as a gambling stake."

Nick chuckled. "I put the library jacket on the bible from our hotel room. Sandra might have gotten religion, but she wouldn't have gotten the message."

"I decoded it just in time. The shipment's due tomorrow."

"Watch yourself, Tony. You're in a dangerous business."

He waved away the words of advice. "Anyway, you've earned your fee, Nick. More than earned it! You stole the book, rescued me, and even rescued Bruno from O'Toole's basement."

"Give him a bone for me."

"I'll do that," Wilde said with a smile. "Now how about some dessert?"

"Q"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* short story by

ELIZABETH FERRARS

first publication in the United States

In reviewing Elizabeth Ferrars' latest book, Death of a Minor Character *(as written by E. X. Ferrars),* Publishers Weekly *cites her "admirable understatement, provocative characters, and dandy plot." In* Twentieth Century Crime and Mystery Writers, *Mary Helen Becker calls her "one of the best contemporary writers of civilized mysteries." As most of you know—or are about to know . . .*

A curious uneasiness came over him. Was it possible, he wondered, that she had somehow learned what had happened to him that day and that she was trying to make tonight a kind of farewell for the two of them, to leave a memory that would last them over the bleak years to come . . . ?

FLY, SAID THE SPY

by ELIZABETH FERRARS

They had promised that they would warn him if it ever became necessary. They had promised that he had nothing to fear, that they would arrange his getaway. They had promised to look after him to start a new life. But he had never quite trusted them to do these things. If there was any real trouble, he had thought that he would be thrown to the wolves. That was why, on an impulse, on a visit to a friend's laboratory, he had acquired a small packet of cyanide. Sooner the cyanide, he had thought, than years in prison. Sooner swift death than the shame of having his wife discover what

Copyright © 1983 by Elizabeth Ferrars.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the man she had loved so devotedly for the last eight years had really been all that time.

So when the warning came, and with it precise instructions as to what he was to do next day, the first thing that happened was that his mind was thrown into a state of confusion in which sheer disbelief that this could happen to him when everything had gone so smoothly and comfortably for so long was blended with blinding fear. This was the time for the cyanide. That very evening. A letter to his wife, telling her the truth about himself, which he would leave beside his typewriter in his small study at home, and then the darkness. But when it came to the point, could he face it? Would it not be best to do as they said and rely on them to take care of their own?

He had been working for them for ten years. They had approached him almost as soon as he, a nuclear physicist, had taken up his new work at the very secret Institute of Physical Science at Bladfield in Berkshire, and because of a bitter and defeated mood that he had been in at the time, mostly because a job that he had coveted had gone to another man, one whom it happened he had despised and never considered seriously as a rival, and also because of trouble over a woman which had almost broken him, he had found something attractive in the thought of taking revenge on a world that did not value him as it ought.

Perhaps at the beginning there had been a spark of idealism in what he had done, an attempt to achieve faith of some kind in something or other, but that had not lasted long. He had never felt much need for a faith, religious or political. His pleasure in what he was paid had lasted longer and what was expected of him had never been too demanding. In fact, the ease with which he had managed to do it had given him a sardonic sort of amusement. It had added to the zest of life. Until, that was to say, he had found that he wanted to marry Rosemary.

When that had happened he had told them that he wanted to end what he had been doing, only to find that this was not going to be allowed. He realized that he ought to have expected that. He was in their power and they were not going to let him go. He was too useful to them. They had repeated their promises that should danger arise they would take care of him, and even sent a bottle of champagne to him on the day of his wedding. But the pressure on him had been firm, the threat unmistakable. So he had gone on as before, distressed at first at having to keep the whole truth about himself from Rosemary, almost confiding in her sometimes and stopping

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

himself only just in time, but gradually becoming accustomed to the situation and in the end finding it surprisingly easy, almost natural, to deceive her.

She was an incurious woman. Just as she accepted his scientific work as so far beyond her grasp that she need not struggle to understand it, she seemed to feel no need for any deep emotional intimacy. She was reserved herself, quiet, not very sociable. She had been working as a technical officer in the Institute when he first met her, and had kept on her job after their marriage, but like him she had very little desire to take part in the active social life of the place. They lived in an attractive old cottage about five miles from it; each had a car and in their work seldom encountered one another, but with their joint salaries they could live very comfortably. He had been afraid at first that those extra payments he received on the quiet might be hard to explain, but she accepted his story without question that they were royalty payments for some commerical work he had done in the past, and she had a remarkable gift for making them go a long way. Though they lived quietly, they lived in a modest way luxuriously. They drank wine every evening. She seemed never to be driven to making small economies in her excellent cooking. Her clothes were elegant. He was able to go to a good tailor. They took expensive holidays.

Yet now all this was to be given up. And for what? If he did what they told him and escaped the net he understood was closing about him, what was ahead of him? Could he bear to think of it? Was it not the time for the cyanide?

He went home earlier than usual. He had thought that perhaps he ought to clear out his desk before he left the Institute in case there was anything incriminating in it that he had forgotten. But what did that matter now? Tomorrow he would either be safely on his way to a remote destination, a long way beyond the reach of retribution, or dead. So if some oddments of evidence against him were found in his desk it would be of no importance whatever.

If there were a chance that some extra precautions might lessen the blow for Rosemary when she found him gone, he might have taken the trouble to go through his desk. But in fact it would not help her. And if his secretary noticed him doing anything so unusual as tidying his drawers it might worry her, and she might carry her worries to someone who would be a danger to him. For all he knew, she was the person who had alerted the people he now had to think of as his enemies, though as marriage had gradually mellowed him,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he had come to think of them as friends. He had not been told who had betrayed him. Whoever it was, however, it seemed best not to do anything unusual today.

When he reached home, he found Rosemary's car in the garage already. That meant that she also had come home earlier than usual. When he went into the house he could hear her in the kitchen and smell something very savory coming from it. His heart began to beat uncomfortably. It was so important now for him to act as he always did, to be perfectly normal, yet this felt a more difficult thing to do than anything he had ever done in his life. He would have to go into the kitchen and kiss her and ask her what delicious thing it was that she was cooking when what he wanted to do was to take her in his arms and crush her to him and bury his face in her hair and burst into tears. He had never been as near tears as he was now since childhood.

But he managed to control himself, kissed her on the nape of her neck, and asked, "What is it that smells so good?"

"Pheasant," she answered. "I went into Reading at lunchtime to have my hair done and happened to see one and thought we might as well give ourselves a bit of a treat."

He noticed then that her dark hair had the glossy sheen that it had when she had just been to the hairdresser and that she was wearing one of her dresses that he liked best. He also saw through the door that led straight from the kitchen into their small dining-room that the table was laid with their good silver and glass and that there were flowers in the middle of it—which no doubt, like the pheasant, had come from Reading. For a moment he though unhappily that they must be expecting visitors, which would not suit him at all. But the table was laid for only two.

"Are we celebrating something?" he asked, surprised at how lightly he managed to ask the question.

"No, it was just a feeling I had that it would be nice to do things properly for once," she said. "Why shouldn't we do it just for ourselves?"

"Why indeed?" It gave him an excuse to hold her as he wanted to and kiss her over and over again. But each kiss felt as if it might be the last one for the rest of his life and he let go of her suddenly because he was afraid that she might feel his trembling.

"Is there time for a drink without spoiling anything?" he asked.

"Of course."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

They drank sherry in the sitting-room. They didn't talk much—but they never did, there was nothing unusual in that. Yet it seemed to him that there was something unusual about Rosemary that evening. Her face, which he thought beautiful in its calm, pallid way, was never expressive, but tonight it struck him that it had a kind of glow—the look of some only half hidden excitement he had seldom seen on it before.

A curious uneasiness came over him. Was it possible, he wondered, that she had somehow learned what had happened to him that day and that she was trying to make tonight a kind of farewell for the two of them, to leave a memory that must last them over the bleak years to come? But how could she have discovered anything—and if she had, why didn't she speak to him about it? No, that wasn't the explanation of her unfamiliar mood.

A desire more intense than he had ever known before to tell her the whole truth about himself possessed him. Only shame kept him silent. He had lived with it in his heart for so long that as a rule he hardly noticed it, except when, as had happened a few times, he had come near to confessing it. He couldn't imagine what look he would see on her face when she knew what he was, and he couldn't bring himself to try to think about it. The fear of it stopped him now. Somehow he would get through the evening, help her to make it the kind of evening it seemed she wanted, and then . . .

Then there were those instructions to be closely studied, or there was the cyanide.

They sat over dinner for a long time, still not talking much, yet both of them, in a strange harmony, seeming to want to make the meal stretch out for as long as possible. She had brought out a bottle of the claret they usually kept only for special occasions, and when the pheasant and the cheese were done, they sat sipping the wine slowly—and after it coffee and brandy, occasionally exchanging remarks about people they had seen that day and things they must do tomorrow, then lapsing again into silence.

Once he had a startling illusion that the brightness of her eyes came from tears. But he had no sooner incredulously thought this when she put a hand to her eyes, yawned, and said she was very tired and would go to bed early. At last they cleared the table together, stacked the dishwasher, she kissed him gently and went up to bed. He sensed that it was a part of her strange mood that she did not want him to follow her.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Going to his study, he switched on the table lamp on his desk, which only half illuminated the rest of the room, opened the drawer where he kept the very important little packet that contained the cyanide, and, holding it in his hand unopened, sat down in a chair that was almost in shadow and fell into a kind of dream. It was strangely painless and timeless.

Life or death? Life of a kind of which he knew nothing, or death of which he knew even less? Occasionally his mind wandered to all that might have been if everything had been different. If he had been a different man. And through it all he remembered clearly that he had a letter to write. That could not be avoided.

At last he stood up, sat down at the desk, and began to write. He wrote in longhand as the noise of the typewriter might have kept Rosemary awake. He wanted the letter to be brief, but he soon found there was so much to say that it would cover two or three pages. He wanted to tell the exact truth, without extenuation. He had made one or two false starts before suddenly his pen seemed to take charge of his hand and he found himself writing fluently and easily.

When it was done, he put the letter in an envelope, wrote "Rosemary" upon it, and laid it down beside his typewriter. Then he carefully set a light to the pages he had discarded, watching them until he could pound them into ash in the fireplace, put the cyanide back in the drawer from which he had taken it, then went softly up to bed.

Rosemary was asleep, or at least wanted him to think that she was. When he slid as quietly as he could into the bed beside her he had a feeling that she was as wide awake as he was. But to his own surprise he had no desire to touch her. If once he did, it would stir feelings in him that he couldn't endure and he would be lost. He lay there aching and motionless a few inches away from her for several hours until at last, towards morning, he drifted off to sleep.

It was a deep sleep, when it came, and he did not hear her get up. She usually got up before he did, got breakfast for herself, and drove off to work while he was only shaving and dressing. This morning was just as usual. By the time he came downstairs to drink the coffee she had left for him on the stove, she had left the house.

On the whole, it made things easier. Not that he had any packing to do at which she would have wondered if she had seen it. He had been told expressly not to take any luggage, only his usual briefcase. He had also been told not to take his passport and that he need not concern himself about money. It and a new passport would be pro-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vided when he was handed his ticket. Meanwhile he had only to drive into Reading, leave his car in the station car-park, just as if he were going to spend a day in London, as he often did, and then he was to get onto the bus for Heathrow.

It occurred to him as he drove towards Reading that the car-park might be full. However, just as he drove into it another car backed out of a space near the entrance and he was able to turn into it immediately. A convenient accident, or perhaps something arranged? He didn't yet know the rules of the new life to which he had committed himself when he found that he hadn't the courage to swallow the cyanide. It might be difficult to learn them without becoming an idiot paranoiac, feeling watching eyes upon him everywhere.

Compared with the evening before, he felt strangely relaxed and calm. On the bus-trip to Heathrow he thought about Rosemary, wondering what her true feelings would be when she read his letter. He could not guess. It was curious to realize, considering how long their love had lasted and how deep it had been for eight whole years, how little they had ever known about one another. But it could do no harm, he thought, once he was satisfactorily settled in his new life, to write to her and suggest that she should join him. She could but refuse. The authorities wouldn't make it difficult for her. Wives were often allowed to join defecting husbands. So perhaps, if her love were what it had seemed to be the evening before, she would come to him when he sent for her and they need not be separated forever.

Then all of a sudden an appalling thought struck him. Suppose his letter filled her with despair. He had left that packet of cyanide in the drawer of his desk!

His calm was shattered, and desperately as he tried to regain it—because it was very important now that he should make no mistake—he was still in the grip of an icy chill when the bus arrived at Heathrow.

The thing that he had been expecting to happen sometime in the next hour or so happened actually just before he left the bus. A woman who had been on it all the way from Reading, and who had put a plastic shopping-bag on the rack above his head, reached up for it just as he was about to get up and make his way to the exit, and in pulling it down spilled its contents—a number of odd parcels—over him and onto the floor. He stopped to help her retrieve them and found one of them pressed into his hand. He understood

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at once what he was supposed to do and slipped it swiftly into his briefcase.

In the airport he went to the men's lavatory and examined what the parcel contained. There was a passport, there was a ticket, there was money—some of it English, some of it foreign currency. The ticket told him the number and the time of his flight. There was some time to wait, so he went to the bookstall and bought a copy of *The Economist* and *Scientific American,* had a cup of coffee, then made his way through passport control without any difficulty and into the departure lounge.

Almost the first person he saw there was Rosemary.

She did not see him. She was looking towards the flight indicator and her face was half turned away from him. He could see only her glossy black hair and the line of her jaw. But even if he had been able to see still less he could never have made any mistake about her. He knew every line of her head and of her slightly stooping shoulders as she sat, clutching a handbag, in a row of other people who were watching the indicator. He even knew the old raincoat she was wearing and the silk scarf at her throat.

A spasm of fear and anger gripped him. This had not been in the plan. He did not approach her, but moved quickly to where she wouldn't be able to see him even if she turned her head. This put him, unfortunately, in a position where he could not see the indicator himself, so that he would be compelled to listen to the unintelligible messages that came booming out from the loudspeakers every few minutes and hope that he would be able to make out his flight number when it was called.

He made a guess at what must have happened to bring her here. She must for once have gone into his study before she left for work, a thing she seldom did and which he had assumed that she would not do when he had left his letter to her beside his typewriter. Then she must have come here expressly to stop him going away.

He realized that he was shaking. Her action put him in fearful danger. Even now there might be men on his track who, if she managed to delay him, would approach him quietly and ask him to be so good as to go with them and answer a few questions. He looked wildly round the lounge, wondering if they were there already. But even if they were, of course they would make themselves inconspicuous until he moved towards the exit doors to board his plane. What a fool he had been to write that letter. Even now, when he knew that she must have found it and read it, it seemed to him incredible

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that she should have so little regard for his safety as to come here to prevent his escape.

Then he realized he was wrong. He must be. That couldn't be what had happened. For if she had found the letter from him and addressed to herself lying on the desk in his study, surely a curious thing to find at any time, wouldn't she have opened it at once, read it on the spot, and if she wanted to stop him leaving come straight upstairs to their bedroom and pleaded with him not to go? Might she not even have pleaded with him to take her with him?

A new thought struck him. Was that why she was here now—not to stop him, but hoping to go with him? Some of his anger melted, though not his fear. Of course it would be impossible for him to take her, for above all he must stick meticulously to his instructions or the people on whose help he was counting would wash their hands of him. Yet it moved him profoundly to think that that might be the explanation of why she was here. He almost got up from the seat he had taken out of sight of her to go hurrying over to her, to take her in his arms just once more, to give her one more kiss.

But then once more he realized that he was wrong. That could not be what had happened.

He had not told her anything in his letter about his plans for his departure. That had been simply for her own safety. When she showed the letter to the authorities, as sooner or later she would have to, it would be some protection for her if she could prove that she could not have known how to stop him, even if she had wanted to. Yet here she was, armed, it was to be supposed, with her passport and a ticket to somewhere or other, or she couldn't have got through into the departure lounge, when she couldn't possibly have known when to expect him. So was it the real truth that her presence here had nothing to do with him at all?

He began to think about the dinner the evening before—the pheasant, the wine, the flowers, her newly done hair, his favorite dress, and the sweet yet somehow melancholy sense of companionship that had pervaded it. It had had the flavor of a farewell dinner. But he had dismissed the thought that she could know, or have at least some strange intuition that tomorrow he would be leaving her. Yet had it, in spite of that, in fact been a farewell? Was it she who had been leaving him?

The chill that he had felt in the bus before arriving at the airport returned. He had thought then that in her misery she might take the cyanide that he had left behind, but this was something entirely

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

new. In the eight years he had been married to her he had never dreamt that she might be unfaithful to him. He himself had never thought seriously of another woman. But that she was now leaving with another man seemed to be the only explanation of that strange dinner party last night and of what she was doing here today.

And the worst of it was that he would never know the truth. From where he had stationed himself he couldn't see her and he didn't dare walk across the lounge and confront her, to see if she was still alone, as she had seemed to be when he arrived, or if a man had joined her. In a few minutes now he would be leaving and he would have to go without finding out if his marriage had been the fine and lovely thing he had believed it to be—in spite of his own treachery, which he felt had never been to her but to something impersonal, of no importance to him—or perhaps from the beginning a mockery.

The shock of facing this had almost reduced his mind to a blank when he heard the number of his flight being called.

He got up and walked towards the exit door to which the voice on the loudspeakers had told him to go, being careful as he went not even to glance in her direction, because a pair of eyes directed straight at anyone, even in the most crowded place, can catch that person's attention. He wanted to hurry, almost to run, but was careful not to walk so fast as to attract notice. He was going through the gate itself when he heard her gasp his name in a tone of horror.

She clasped his arm. "No!" she said in a desperate whisper. "No, you can't do this to me!"

He stood still. Since she had caught up with him there was no longer any need for haste. What he had to do now was pacify her, persuade her to let him go as quietly and unobtrusively as possible. How or why she came to be there no longer mattered.

"I've got to go," he said. "I don't want to, but I've no choice. It was all in my letter to you."

"What letter?" she asked.

"The one you've read, the one I left by my typewriter."

"I never found any letter by your typewriter. I haven't been into your study today."

"Then what are you doing here?"

"I told you in my letter."

It was his turn to ask in bewilderment, "What letter?"

"The one I left on the mantelpiece in the sitting-room."

"I haven't been into the sitting-room today."

"Then what are you doing here?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

She had let go of his arm, but they were standing still in the long corridor that led towards the gate from which he could reach the plane he must catch while the other passengers who were heading towards it went hurrying past them.

"I can't wait here to tell you," she said. "Go home and read my letter."

"I can't go home," he said. "I can never go home. Never again in my life. I wish you hadn't tried to stop me. I couldn't face what they'd do to me."

"I'm not trying to stop you doing anything," she said, "but I can't wait here. There isn't time. Oh, God, why did this have to happen? I said goodbye to you last night. I tried to make the evening special. I had my hair done, I cooked a pheasant, I wore that dress you like, all to try to leave you with one good memory of me when you found out the truth. And up to the last minute I wasn't sure that I wasn't going to swallow some cyanide I'd got hold of in case of trouble, rather than leave you and face what's ahead of me now. But then I hadn't the courage. So let me go—please let me go! I haven't time to go on talking here!"

"Cyanide?" he said, bemused. "*You* were going to take some cyanide?"

"Yes, it's all in that letter you haven't read."

"But it was I who was going to take the cyanide."

"Why should you do that?"

"It's all in the letter you haven't read."

"I don't understand."

Neither did he immediately, but his mind was quicker than hers, better adjusted to accepting evidence that might upset the most unquestioned of theories. The shock of what he had just discovered, of how effectively he had been tricked, was the most severe that he had felt that day, but he was able to make himself take her gently by the arm and start urging her along the corridor.

"I think we've been under certain misapprehensions about one another," he said, "but no doubt we can sort them out. What name have they put on your passport?"

"My passport?" She sounded dazed, as if she had not taken in the question.

"The one they gave you today," he said.

"Oh, that one—Mary Smith."

"And mine's John Brown. Not very imaginative, but I suppose people do have names like that. Remember now, you're Mary and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I'm John—at least until we get to wherever they're taking us. How long have you been working for them?"

Her face had cleared. She had begun to emerge from her stupor. Her normal look of calm reserve had returned, a reserve which he felt he understood now better than he ever had before. Perhaps she was feeling the same thing about him.

"Ten years," she said. "I wanted to stop it when we got married because I thought it might do you damage, but they wouldn't let me."

"Just so," he said. "It's a familiar story. Once they've got hold of you, they don't let you go."

"I've wanted so much—oh, I've longed so to tell you all about it, but I was too ashamed."

"Me, too."

"How long have you been working for them?"

"Ten years."

"And they've let us go on all this time without letting either of us know that we were both doing the same job!"

"It just shows what clever spies we were that we didn't find one another out."

"But wasn't it horribly cruel?"

"Yes, I suppose we might have had a lot of cosy chats if we'd known the truth about one another—which I expect would have been very enjoyable. But I daresay we were recruited by different branches of the service. It's possible their right hand didn't know what their left hand was doing. One tends to think of them as infallible, but they probably make as many mistakes as our own chaps do. Why did you do it?"

"For the money, of course. I wasn't sure if I liked it at first, but you get used to it."

"So all the pleasant things we've had—the filet steaks and the salmon and the new bedroom furniture and that trip to Madeira—have mostly been paid for by you!"

"Of course. You don't think we could have managed it on what you gave me. I was afraid you might get suspicious, but you never had much of a head for money."

"And I thought it was I who was paying for those things and it was wonderful how far you made the money stretch." To his own surprise he was piqued at having been so deluded. "When did they warn you?"

"Yesterday."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Me, too. I expect there's a big operation on, cleaning up the Institute."

The corridor ahead of them seemed endless, but at last they reached the gate through which they were to take off together into safety. They passed through the barrier, where they were given their seat reservations and were lucky enough to obtain them side by side, though as Mary Smith and John Brown they couldn't claim to be connected with one another.

The plane left punctually. As it lifted from the ground they clasped each other's hands tightly, though neither of them was normally afflicted by flying nerves. Almost at once the plane penetrated a deep layer of cloud and the familiar ground beneath them disappeared.

And they lived happily ever after?

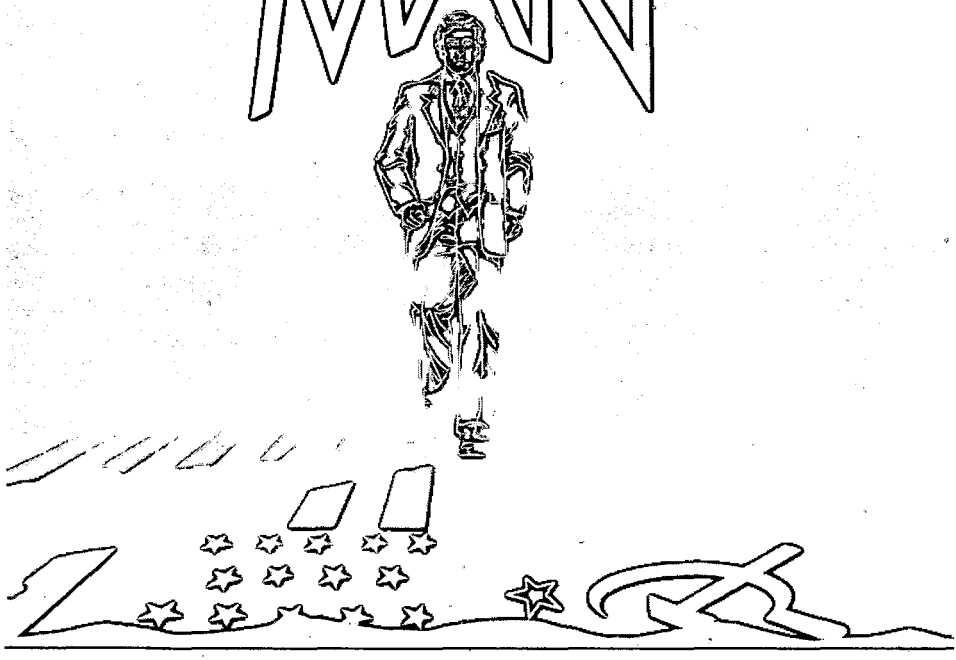
That is by no means certain. Deception had become a way of life for them, and as with other forms of deception, it may have lent a spice to their relationship without which they would not really be much interested in one another.

On the other hand, in the watches of the night, each may have wondered if the other could be a dougle-agent. That may have saved their marriage.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JONATHAN EVANS

THE SOLITARY MAN



"A fascinating book." —Len Deighton

"THE SOLITARY MAN... like being on a roller coaster of terror and suspense. My hat's off to Jonathan. A marvelous book—I want to see more of him." —Sean Flannery

"Riveting... THE SOLITARY MAN is a wonderful read, on a par with the best of John le Carre and the thoughtful thrillers of Graham Greene." —Cleveland Plain Dealer

ISBN 812-50-279-5 $3.95 448 PAGES OCTOBER
CANADIAN EDITION ISBN 812-50-280-9 $4.50

TOR BOOKS We're Part of the Future

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The rest of the dogs of Roca Torre wandered the streets, ribs all but poking through patchy hair. Pillo's dogs had sleek coats and nervous legs . . .

THE BARKING DOGS OF ROCA TORRE

by MADELYN DeLORIER

Last night the dogs barked again. It's when the dogs don't bark that the fright pounces down on me . . . when I feel eyes burning into my back . . . when the skin under my hair, tied back with a frayed thong, becomes like a wet sponge.

The dogs are the protected ones, kept apart on rooftops rimmed with thick terra-cotta tiles. They have sleek coats and nervous legs; they bark for no more reason, usually, than to make it known that they exist. Some, probably, have never touched earth.

The rest of the dogs of Roca Torre wander the streets, ribs all but poking through patchy hair. They search for food in the garbage cans of cafés, haunt vendors, beg from the munching tourists on the Plaza de España that overlooks the sea. Sometimes when a pair of pleading eyes have followed me home, I've stolen a bone from the soup kettle on our stove and tossed it down the walkway . . . watched the dog slink away to hide with it from the others. I've never touched one. I have a feeling every one of them crawls with worms from the rot they're driven to eat.

If my mother were here she might smile and say, "Carla, *mi ijita,* you are too much."

But it's been four years since I've seen that smile, watched the pain take her dark eyes. I have her dark hair but not her eyes. Mine are blue, like my father's were. She said he was from the north. But I never knew him.

There was only my uncle, my mother's brother.

I hated him. I hated the way his face bristled with a mix of dark and grey whiskers, and I hated the harsh tone of his voice, the

© 1984 by Madelyn DeLorier.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

harsher laugh when he ran his hand over my hair where it fell over my bony shoulders. When my mother died, he sold what little we had and set us wandering in a car more battered than not. A car that barely made it over mountain roads along the Sierra Nevada. On my tenth birthday we sat on a cold hillside eating canned *caballa,* and life seemed as foggy as the valley below us. The fish tasted as if it hadn't even been cooked.

By the time we got to Roca Torre, his wandering fever must have worn out. The place he found for us to live was off a walkway of broad spread-out steps that wandered downward, hugging a cliff, and finally straightened into a narrow street that spilled onto the Paseo del Mar. Beyond the speeding cars, the sea splashed restlessly onto the silvery black sand.

In the maze of crowded buildings, we were close to the lowest set of steps, our dwelling one of a pair sharing a wall in back. The once-white limed courtyard beside us served both houses, with a heavy board gate attached to the corner of ours. A path inside passed our door and led to the house in back. But because of a sudden rise of rock, it set higher, with its tile-edged parapet looking down on ours. And ours looking down on the walkway of the stepped street.

The only bedroom, a room on the second floor, had a cramped winding stairway that opened onto the roof. The house behind us, I learned later, had one, too. The first floor was only a sort of kitchen with a square table and chairs and a stove poked into one corner. The opposite wall was a stretch of empty space.

"So, *llorona,*" my uncle said when we saw it, "that is for you. We put a bed there for you, eh?" Then, settling it, he spit out the door.

I let it go with a half shrug. I hated him even more when he called me *llorona.*

The bed turned out to be a mattress set on boxes. And I wound up sharing the space with a motor-bike that he brought in at night, a swap for the battered car that had gotten us here.

An old woman by the name of Rosita—Doña Rosita—lived in the house in back. She had thick white braids that she wore like a halo around her head. She became the sunlight of my life. How many times, when my uncle was out, she would call to me.

"Come, Carlita," she would say, giving her own touch to my name, "come. We have a large kettle of thick soup. With meat." Or fresh bread that smelled like heaven—or chewy sweets that she'd baked.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

My uncle led his own life apart. If there was no food in the house, it meant nothing to him. Even my going to school was Doña Rosita's doing.

Often, after school, Luis was at her house, too. His mother and father worked in one of the big tourist hotels. Luis was her grandson, a year younger than I, but with a ripe disdain for girls. In spite of that, though, he tolerated me. And, I guess, in a way he was my friend. I really had no other. For any parents who knew my uncle judged me by him. And I could ask no one to the place where we lived.

Then, a week before I became twelve, Doña Rosita died. Not slowly like my mother, but all at once. Forever I'll remember her black casket being carried on neighbors' shoulders up to the white church. My uncle refused to go with me. I hung back at the edge of the mourners, feeling more alone than ever before in my life.

As we were leaving Mass, Luis escaped from his mother and slipped over to me.

"Come to the burial, Carla," he whispered, touching my hand ever so lightly. Then he darted back to his mother's side.

I went with the procession into the walled churchyard. But when the creaking of the ropes touched my ears I ran. I ran all the way home. I found my way up to our roof, leaned on the terra-cotta tiles, and let my tears flow. It was peaceful there. Quiet. And after that—for a while—I took to going up there to be alone.

But not for long.

A man by the name of Pillo moved into Doña Rosita's house and deposited his two barking dogs on the rooftop above us. They had long thin legs and pointed faces and were a brown so dark they sometimes looked black. Pillo built a rough canvas-and-wood shelter for them in the far corner, but they had already learned to leap back and forth from their rooftop to ours. Whenever I went up, they barked even more—running at me as if to frighten me away. The only times they came down was when they ran in the walled courtyard. And never were they allowed out of the solid wooden gate.

Luis laughed at my fear of the dogs and shrugged it away. But then he too was gone, to a secondary school—he'd told me hastily one day—where many boys lived. The loss was unreal.

Before long Pillo and my uncle were spending much time together. Both slept most of the day and were out most of the night. Except when they sat at our kitchen table with a bottle of wine between

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them—wine that smelled like sour vinegar and stained their mouths an ugly dark red.

I never knew where my uncle got his money, but he always seemed to have some. For what *he* wanted. Maybe there was still some left from my mother's things that he'd sold. The pesetas he gave me only bought the slimmest supply of food. When I asked for extra for a pair of sandals or a blouse, he laughed at me.

"You're old enough to earn it yourself now, *llorona*. What do you think of that, Pillo?" he'd ask. *"No es cierto?"* And they'd give me a look that sent icy shivers down my spine.

I learned to stay away from them when I could.

During the next year I managed to find a few little jobs in the open cafés along the Paseo del Mar. Sometimes no more than sweeping. But each time, when it was discovered I was only thirteen, I lost them. I began wondering how many more years could go on like the ones past.

Then, late one Sunday afternoon when my uncle finally got himself from his bed and swallowed coffee and bread, he turned to me with a strange kind of look on his unshaven face.

"Get your shoes, *llorona,*" he ordered, blowing smoke from the cigarillo hanging out of the corner of his mouth, "and come with me."

"Why?" I could feel something was all wrong.

But his eyes only turned to two fiery darts. Then he swung out the door. I was afraid not to follow.

I slid into my sandals and found him waiting at the heavy board gate. He opened the latch and I went out behind him, pulled the gate to, and heard it click. He headed up the steps. We got to the top, passed the whitewashed church, the half dozen closed shops, and crossed the street to the broad Plaza de España where all the tourists seemed to go.

Up a way, a cluster of people were pushing together like a mushroom, looking inward. He pulled me to them. In the center was a man with a small movable table that stood on spindly legs. On top were three walnut half shells with a tiny white ball that he made fly from one to another. Money seemed to be flying, too. Curious, I'd watched this game before when I was alone. I didn't know why I was watching it now.

Then my uncle pulled me back. "Watch me," he said under his breath. "Watch my hands."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He moved to the cluster again. Excitement was growing noisy. His hands twisted. They moved like swift bird wings. And suddenly there was something in one. I blinked, not sure of what I'd seen. He was back beside me, sauntering away, his hands in his own pockets. His head signaled me to follow.

Quickly I moved beside him, fell into his strolling pace.

"Good, eh?" he said out of the corner of his mouth.

Then I knew what I'd seen.

"You took that man's wallet."

He looked down at me with a one-sided grin.

I felt sick. I pushed the hair away from my neck. It felt as if water was running down my back.

He stopped at another mushroom of people farther along.

"Try it, *llorona,*" he said, pointing with his bristly chin. "Slow like." And the ugly red line of his mouth began to spread out.

My knees were quivering, my hands drawing sweat. "I—" Words caught in my throat. "No!" came out like a cry.

He grasped my arm. His bony fingers dug into my flesh. I pulled away—heard my sleeve tear. I turned and ran.

I raced across the plaza, the street, past the closed shops—bumped into tourists with nothing better to do on a Sunday than mill about carts of wares. I dashed past the church, down the walkway—stumbling down the steps. When I got to the house, I slammed the gate behind me and darted inside. Half sick with fear, I ran upstairs to the roof. I fell against the door. Behind me Pillo's dogs barked, leapt over the parapet, and came at me, growling. I was sure they smelled my fear. But finally they jumped back to their own roof, to the canvas shelter, still barking.

I slumped into the shadowed corner where the two roofs met, crouching till my legs felt like bent boards. Yet I heard no gate open, no door slam below me. The barking went on. The dogs seemed to be taking turns to show annoyance. How long they barked I didn't know. How long I crouched in the corner I didn't know, either.

The shadows deepened.

After a while I got up and tried to stretch the numbness from my legs. I went to the corner above the gate and leaned on the tiles, leaned over to see if my uncle might be coming yet. The lamp posts were lighted now. But the light fell only below me. I saw no one. I leaned farther, stretching over the parapet. With a strange crunching sound, I felt the heavy corner tile move. I caught it. Pulled it back. I felt the one beside it move, too. But only a speck.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

My head began to spin like a wild carrousel. Frightening thoughts whirled like pinwheels. *Llorona! Llorona!* I wasn't a whiner, the sniveling baby he tried to make me seem! Why did he call me that? It stuck on a pinwheel point . . . spinning at me. He *couldn't* make me do as he did!

Behind me the dogs' yelping seemed to grow louder. Why wouldn't they forget I was here? I wanted to plug my ears.

The sky was turning dark.

Then, suddenly, the pinwheels stopped.

And I knew where I'd wait for my uncle's return.

But the dogs . . .

I ran downstairs, took bones from the soup pot sitting on the stove, dropped them into a pan, and carried them upstairs. Still the barking.

I went to the roof front, looked up the walkway and down. No one stirred. I ran to the back parapet and threw the bones up and over onto Pillo's roof, aiming for the shelter. The barking lessened. Then it stopped. The only sound was teeth scraping against bones.

I carried the pan downstairs and hurried back up. The pinwheels of fright had begun again inside my head. I was shaking so hard I thought I'd be sick.

I went to the shadowed corner over the gate to wait. How long? The spinning in my head numbed me to time. Then, finally, placing each foot carefully, a familiar figure swayed down the steps, stopped at the lamp post.

A match flared and went to the stub of a cigarillo in my uncle's mouth as he turned toward the house.

I clutched the tile, leaned over. I watched him reach for the gate and fumble with the latch. And in those seconds the thick tile had crunched forward . . . fallen . . . and found its mark below.

He hadn't uttered a sound.

I backed away and spun around. But not before a shadow on the upper roof had moved, too. I felt eyes burning down into me. Fright rushed the blood to my head like an explosive fire. How long had Pillo been there?

Pillo said nothing to me then—and nothing to the authorities when they checked on the accident, pretending great innocence for both of us. "Si, Señores, it could perhaps have been the dogs," he agreed.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Afterward, in the kitchen, he said only that he'd come up to check on the quiet of the dogs. They had been quiet—too quiet—for too long.

If only I hadn't thrown the bones . . .

But now it is not only the barking that frightens me. It is the smug look that Pillo wears—and the feel of the tile beneath my hands.

Last night I escaped back over the mountains to where I once lived. But it was only a dream.

What is real is the Paseo del Mar. I've heard it follows the sea far.

"Q"

SUBSCRIBER ASSISTANCE

MOVING? Please give us 6 weeks' advance notice. Attach your label below and write in your new address.

QUESTION OR PROBLEM? We can handle it faster if we have your label.

IMPORTANT MESSAGE: From time to time the EQMM mailing list is made available to companies that want to send promotional material offering their products. To do this they must have our approval of the mailing piece itself and of what they are selling. If you prefer not to receive these mailings, please tell us and we will remove your name. Write to the address below.

EXPIRATION DATE. In the upper right hand corner of your mailing label you'll find the date of your last issue—e.g., JAN 83 means your subscription expires with the January 1983 issue.

New address? Put new address below

Please attach here your Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine label from the cover of your most recent issue.

Name_____

Address_____

City_____ **State**_____ **Zip**_____

MAIL TO:
ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE
BOX 1930
MARION
OHIO 43305

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* short story by

WILLIAM BANKIER

From day one, Louisa Wright-Harris had been attracted to Mike Swift. She had heard of him, of course, from his earlier television successes. More than once she had seen him on the small screen, running between crowded tables to accept yet another statuette as writer/director of the year's best sitcom . . .

FORGED LAUGHTER

by WILLIAM BANKIER

Mike Swift sat at the back of the screening room beside Louisa Wright-Harris with his arm across the back of the seat, his hand gently touching her shoulder. For half an hour, as the pilot episode of *Skylarks* was projected before this select group of people, there was an atmosphere of appreciation in the room. They knew they were watching situation comedy written, acted, and directed by experts.

As the credits rolled and the lights came up, there was an outburst of applause. "Absolute genius, if I say so myself," Richard Lotus enthused. In threadbare trousers and a rumpled sweater, he looked nothing like the suave actor whose impeccable timing had triggered so many hilarious moments on the screen. "And your contribution was pretty worthwhile, too, Mike," he said to the program's creator.

"I thought everybody was solid gold," Swift said. He was experiencing a familiar sense of bereavement that overcame him whenever the creative process was finished. Now that the pilot was successfully made, turning out the episodes would be routine.

"I look so tiny," Bronwyn Highborn carolled in her engaging Welsh lilt. "You tower over me in every scene," she accused Lotus. That was the point and she knew it. She had been cast in the role not

© 1984 by William Bankier.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

only for her pixie face and her intelligent delivery of lines but also for the contrast between her size—not much bigger than a minute—and Richard Lotus's stratospheric angularity which suggested he had been assembled in sections.

Carl Copman, head cameraman, got out of his front seat and walked back to shake the director's hand. "Well done, Mike," he said in his East London accent. "You've done it again. Another winner."

"Thanks, Carl. Thanks for the beautiful shooting. You didn't miss a moment—editing the film was a delight."

"I think we all deserve a glass of champagne," Tennyson Fenway said. He had been standing by himself throughout, his back braced against a wall in such a way as to relieve a tension ache in his lower spine. "And I'm buying." Such an invitation should have elicited an enthusiastic response but in this case only silence was forthcoming. They all knew Fenway and they understood from experience that the producer's generosity was always accompanied by an unpleasant shock, like a warm bath with a spider in the tap.

The room waited. Fenway did not disappoint them. "It's a beautiful program," he said, pushing away from the wall and parading his three-piece blue pin-stripe suit down the carpeted aisle. "All it requires is the laugh-track and we're ready to go on the air."

It was important for Swift to respond immediately. If Tennyson Fenway was allowed to advance a proposition for as long as two minutes unopposed, the idea seemed to take root and could be judged from then on as a permanent part of the landscape, like the 300-year-old cedars on his estate near Wilton.

"Forget about a laugh-track, Tenny," Swift said. "This program needs canned laughter like it needs commercial breaks." *Skylarks* was scheduled to run on BBC2, where it would be screened uninterrupted, thanks to the non-commercial policy of the British Broadcasting Corporation.

"I don't agree, Michael. A good program can only be improved by the addition of a laugh-track."

"The way Pavarotti singing 'che gelida manina' would be improved by a little echo-chamber and a bit of reverb."

Bronwyn Highborn giggled and then clapped a hand over her mouth.

"Let's not you and I argue in front of the troops," Fenway said, smiling behind his tinted glasses. "Last one around the corner to Bianchi's gets the Cliquot with the cork in it."

Louisa put an arm through Mike's on their way out of the building

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

onto Wardour Street. Soho was steaming on a summer evening, tourists drifting in search of adventure, hookers and touts soliciting them softly from doorways, men and women heading for famous restaurants, sightseers deriving a vicarious thrill from watching it all happening.

"Don't let him get you down," Louisa said. She was troubled by Swift's appearance. He was in one of his grey moods, the opposite of the manic phase that drove him through a production schedule on a wave of euphoria. His long face was dragged down by the weight of a sullen mouth and he had not bothered to comb his hair to cover the bald patch. "You've got a great success there. *Skylarks* will be a winner."

"It needs no artificial laughter," Swift said bluntly. "He is not going to adulterate my program with a chintzy, phony laugh-track."

Louisa worked as personal assistant to the managing director of an insurance firm on Lombard Street in the City. She had met Mike Swift when he came around doing research for a proposed situation comedy based on life in the head office of a world-famous insurance brokerage which he would call "Liggett's of London." The resulting script, which was set in a penthouse office with windows on all sides high above the metropolis, was called *Skylarks*.

From day one, Louisa had been attracted to the intense middle-aged man who drifted around the office making notes. She had heard of Mike Swift, of course, from his earlier television successes. More than once she had seen him on the small screen, running between crowded tables to accept yet another statuette as writer/director of the year's best sitcom. Now here he was in real life, not only talking to her boss and accepting graciously a cup of coffee from her hands, but later asking her to come out with him for a drink that evening. "You could answer a lot of questions for me, Miss Wright-Harris. Make my job a lot easier."

It had not been a line. He did have quite a few serious questions about the way the office worked and the feelings of employees about the policy-holders and their attitudes when something went wrong and the firm had to pay. Louisa nattered on it seemed for hours, and it was not until after drinks and then dinner when the technical questions were all finished that they discovered they didn't want to bid each other goodnight.

He was honest. He let her know on that first evening that he was a married man, separated from a wife in a house in Richmond and with a nineteen-year-old son still at home. They hadn't figured out

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

exactly what was wrong, he and Karen. The symptom was they couldn't be together without arguing, bitterly enough that young Jeremy would call down the stairway: "For Christ's sake, you two!" So Swift was living these days in a small apartment in Bayswater.

Now, almost a year after that first night together, the good-looking couple walked into the wine bar and joined Tennyson Fenway's champagne party. The actors and crew were over the moon because this was clearly the start of something big. The pilot film was so good that everybody knew a long series would follow and probably two more after that. Then there would be summer reruns with all those lovely residual payments. The dicey lives of these showfolk had become secure for the next couple of years.

Yet they could all see that Michael Swift was looking as if he had just been slapped in the belly with a large, extremely wet fish. They tried to maintain their cheer but when he approached a group of revelers it was like the arrival of a ghost at the feast.

"Smile, Michael," Richard Lotus said. "It's only money in the bank."

"It's acid in the stomach. If Fenway puts a laugh-track on the show, I won't be able to watch it."

"Surely you exaggerate. All the shows have laugh-tracks. The television audience expects it."

"That doesn't make it right. In prison camp, they expect the lash. Have you ever imagined some of these sitcom scripts without the laughs dubbed in? Mediocre stuff at best. They're using faked audience reaction to fog bad material past the public. *Skylarks* doesn't need that."

"Agreed. But will canned laughter hurt it?"

"Subtlety," Swift said. "There are degrees of humor in my script. Some of them merit a smile as the situation builds. The laugh comes when the viewer has been made ready. We don't need to hype it with hysteria from the first line."

As they moved away, Louisa saw the reaction on the faces of the actors. She heard Lotus mutter: "Bloody perfectionist, can't let well enough alone."

She said to Swift: "Michael, can't we just relax and enjoy ourselves?" But her escort had located Tennyson Fenway at the end of the bar and was headed that way.

"Fill your glass," Fenway said as his director approached, followed by his pretty little contact from the insurance company.

"I've had enough," Swift said. He might have been referring to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their production argument. "Let's clear the air once and for all. No laugh-track on the *Skylark* pilot film or on the episodes that follow."

"Not for my money," Fenway said. "And it *is* my money."

"And you'll be collecting a nice return on your investment when we complete the sale to the network. Let's keep the soundtrack clean, let every living room produce its own laughter according to its own reactions."

Tennyson Fenway had the face of an overbred racehorse, the result of years of intermarriage between patrician cousins. His nostrils were dark caves, his pale eyes blinked from a shelf of cheekbone, his ears were giant moths flown to rest on the sides of his triangular head. "Please trust me," he said. "The laugh-track is essential because the public now expects to hear it."

"The public has been brainwashed by people like you. Continuous laughter littering a soundtrack is as pointless and disturbing as rubbish thrown from a car."

"Set aside your artistic sensibilities, my dear," Fenway said. "Consider the poor viewer. He comes home from work, half stunned by the beating he's taking from life. He sits down in a pool of his own silence to watch our film. He has no sensitivity left. He won't know unless he hears laughter whether he's watching a comedy program or, indeed, whether he's having a good time."

Swift felt uncontrollable rage building up. He sensed he was within half a minute of grabbing Fenway and pounding a fist into that fatuous face. He prepared to leave the bar. "My final word," he said. "You'll dub a laugh-track on this film over my dead body."

"That might be the best thing," Fenway said to the retreating back. "We might all be able to have a few laughs then."

Out on the street, Louisa caught hold of Swift's arm. "Don't spoil everybody's party," she said.

"They love it," Swift said, "they're actors. As long as we guarantee them a few months' work, there can be plague in the city."

Carl Copman joined them, establishing his position as mediator by the fact that he was carrying his glass of wine. "I know how you feel," he said. "I feel the same way. This show doesn't need a laugh-track."

"Thanks."

"But don't walk away," the cameraman said. "You're leaving the stage to the moneyman."

"No I'm not. I conceived this project and I intend to see it proceeds my way."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Have you read the small print?" Copman asked. "My East End barrowboy upbringing has made me more of a businessman than you are. I've been over the contract. As producer, Tenny Fenway has final say on post-production. That includes whether or not we dub a laugh-track."

"I don't believe that."

"Believe it. You're so busy creating characters and writing dialogue, you don't even know when they're undressing you and selling your clothes."

A cab stopped in response to Swift's signal and he helped Louisa into the back seat. As they drove away, Copman called after them: "Whatever happens, Michael, I'm on your side!"

In Louisa's Chelsea apartment, Swift sat in his favorite chair by the front window looking down into a small green park that occupied the center of the square with massive Edwardian buildings painted white surrounding it on all sides. The park was fenced and its solitary gate was closed with a lock. All the tenants of the buildings had been issued keys and a sign on the fence informed the public that the place was private. There were trees in the park, various shrubs, well tended beds of flowers, and there were benches. Apart from the occasional gardener with his back bent, Swift had never seen any people in the park. He called it "Dog in the Manger Gardens." Louisa brought him a cup of tea and sat on a chair close to him.

"Seems a shame," she said.

"Somebody should use those benches," he agreed.

"I mean all this argument with Fenway. You have a terrific program, you should be happy."

"It's a matter of who's in charge. I've watched Fenway operating the switches that control the volume of a laugh-track. All through the playback he sits there feeding it in. This line gets a giggle. This one gets a roar. He plays God."

"I agree *Skylarks* doesn't need dubbing. But it's so good, surely it won't hurt."

"I think it will." Swift got up and went to the telephone. He rang the wine bar and found Fenway still there. "We have to sort this out," he said. "Tomorrow morning in your office."

"I agree. Let's clear the air."

When Swift put down the phone, Louisa said: "You've changed, even in the months I've known you. When you were making the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

show, you were bright and eager. Now it's done and it's so very good, but you're bitter.

"I've always been this way," Swift acknowledged. "I don't react very well to success. I'm better in the face of adversity."

"That's sad. Do you know why?"

"My analyst has tried to make it clear to me. Something to do with not believing I deserve to be happy."

Swift did not spend the night with Louisa—he said his mood would only bring her down. He went home to his flat and, before going to bed, took out his contract with Fenway's production company and tried to make sense out of the dense paragraphs of type that looked like pepper spilled on the page. Carl Copman was right; he was an innocent where legal matters were concerned. With his eyes swimming, nothing comprehended, he went to bed.

At ten-thirty, Tennyson Fenway sat behind his desk with the confidence of a man who lives on land given to his ancestors centuries ago for favors done to a king. He was flanked by a youthful lawyer with a faulty knot in his tie and an open briefcase on the floor beside him. Michael Swift sat well away from the desk with the contract on his knee, following along as the two money men took turns reading aloud. Add a choir and it could have been a church service celebrating the Feast of St. Fiscal.

"So it should be clear," Fenway concluded, "even to you, dear Michael, that I have the final say regarding details of post-production. The contract says so."

"That's what the contract says." There was desperation in Swift's voice. "Listen to what I say. The laugh-track, think what it is. Voices recorded laughing on some other occasion—we're not even sure what the occasion was. You take their laughter—you missappropriate it, I maintain—and you apply it to a situation of which the laugher has no knowledge. What if the one who laughs would not have thought some remark of Richard Lotus's is funny? Despite his feelings, his laugh is stolen and broadcast as an endorsement of Lotus's joke. He would have every right to sue you."

"Come on," the young lawyer said.

"And that's why recorded laughter sounds hollow."

"You're becoming philosophical, Michael," Fenway said. "Almost metaphysical."

"Can you deny it? It's forgery, dammit, your legal friend should see that. No better than stealing a signature and placing it on a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

check where the signatory never intended it to be. You steal laughs and present them in false situations. Forged laughter."

They argued till noon. Tennyson Fenway would not be moved. He looked anxiously at Swift as the director was leaving the office. "A word of advice, old colleague. See a doctor. Your intensity scares the dickens out of me."

"You won't be seeing any more of it," Swift said. "I resign from the series." He turned a sarcastic face in the doorway. "I take it I'm allowed to resign."

Swift went home. Karen took a fleeting look at his face and became jolly and loud, ordering her missing husband around like a child, sitting him down and placing food in front of him. Jeremy came downstairs, sat at the kitchen table, and told story after story about his experiences at the film company where he was working on a lighting crew. Swift raised and lowered his spoon like a robot.

Eventually he spoke. "They all have to go."

"Who does?"

"The people in my program. No more Skylarks."

"You told me it was going well."

"I've resigned," Swift said. "But Fenway is laughing at me. Cans and cans of laughter. They've all got to go."

The doctor came and diagnosed Swift's breakdown. Obviously he had been working too hard and now, after completion of the pilot film, there had been a reaction. He prescribed heavy medication.

A day and a night later when the patient was still talking, still proving difficult for a working wife to handle, the doctor arranged for Swift's admission to a hospital.

"Why does he get this way?" Jeremy asked when the house was normal again.

"He's the youngest of five brothers," Karen said, "the other four all mediocrities. They're in and out of average jobs, drinking too much, just scraping by. The father was like that, too. Michael is the only one with a spark of brilliance. And somehow he can't cope with it. Every time he climbs above the rest of them, it's as if he decides they resent his success."

"Do they?"

"The father is the important one. He seems oblivious of his talented son. Or maybe he's jealous. He's always withheld his approval."

Tennyson Fenway sold the pilot film to the network and hired a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

director to proceed with filming the rest of the series. *Skylarks* went on the air and was a great success. In the hospital where he was convalescing, Swift watched part of one episode in his robe and slippers, then left the room, hysterical recorded laughter following him down the corridor.

It was all over when he came home at last, thin and apologetic and apparently cured. A letter arrived soon after, informing him that his series had been nominated, along with three others, as best situation comedy of the year. A handwritten note on the bottom of the page suggested that, although the results were officially secret until the presentation night at the Savoy Hotel two weeks hence, Swift had better start rehearsing his acceptance speech.

"Another award!" Karen enthused. "Your work is so good, Michael, and they all know it."

Her husband gave her a pained smile, as if the letter were from his dentist and contained a schedule of appointments for root-canal work.

He went to bed. In the morning, he got up early by himself, breakfasted, and shaved. When Karen came down, he was prowling around the bookshelves. "Where's that little book by Lewis Carroll, the one that always makes me laugh out loud?"

"The Hunting of the Snark?" Karen was able to put her hand on it. "That's more like it, Mike."

But he shoved the book into a pocket and left the house, walking smartly down the road to the bus stop. In the West End, he found a call-box that worked and telephoned Carl Copman at home. Carl was on his way in and agreed to meet Swift at the recording studio where much of their post-production work was done.

"How are you these days, mate?" he inquired as they drank the coffee and ate the pastries the studio management provided.

"I need a favor from you, Carl. You're the one I trust. I'm going to record something this morning. I want you to take the tape home and keep it."

"Easy," Copman said.

"There's a harder part," Swift told him. "Can you gain entry to the sound booth at the Savoy Hotel when they do the awards dinner in a couple of weeks' time?"

Copman was as shocked as everybody else a few days later when he heard of Michael Swift's suicide. His clothes and his wallet and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

his father's wristwatch were found in a neat pile on a remote beach near his favorite seaside town. Swift's statement that he was "going away" had been taken at face value by the loyal cameraman. Now he understood what his old friend meant—and the significance of the tape-recording came home to him.

On the night of the awards dinner, Copman arrived early at the Savoy and made his way to the sound booth overlooking the grand salon. He was pleased to discover that the man in charge was an old friend.

"Evening, Carl."

"Evening, Danny. I've got a favor to ask you. A colleague wants us to do something for him. Sort of a dying request, you might say."

Gradually, the hall filled with elegantly dressed show-business people who sat down at the round tables and tucked in to a feast prior to the main business on the platform at one end of the room. TV cameras were on hand, recording the affair for a later broadcast. There was a mood of sadness due to the absence of Mike Swift. But secretly, all felt that his dramatic suicide had contributed an operatic quality to the proceedings that would make the evening memorable.

When the time came for the presentation of the award for Best Situation Comedy, the envelope was opened, the name of Michael Swift was read out to a hush, and then to a rising wave of applause. "Receiving the award on behalf of the late Mike Swift, his producer and long-time friend, Tennyson Fenway!"

Fenway, splendid in a midnight-blue tuxedo and maroon bowtie, got up from the table where he was sitting with the widow and her son and made his way to the microphone. Over the PA system came the theme music from the triumphant series, *Skylarks*.

At the microphone, with the statuette in his hands, Fenway waited for the applause to die. Then, into an expectant silence, he said: "I have been the greatest admirer, the firmest supporter, of Mike Swift and his work for many years."

A peal of laughter rang out over the speakers. Audience and speaker were shocked speechless for a moment. Those who knew the man recognized his laugh—it was Swift. Baffled, Fenway could do nothing but proceed with his prepared speech.

"As partners, dear Michael and I always cooperated to bring the best possible work to the screen."

Again Swift's laugh rang out through the hall. This time, it raised a nervous titter from some of the listeners. Fenway made one more attempt. "I only wish he were here to share the moment."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The laughter sounded again, monstrously inappropriate. There was confusion now, people running to the sound booth to find out what was happening, Fenway turning to the Master of Ceremonies. Finally, the crowd decided to terminate the embarrassment. They broke into a round of applause and Fenway, not sure where to look, prepared to leave the stage.

It was then that Michael Swift, dressed in jeans and a turtleneck sweater, strode between the tables and sprang up the stairs onto the stage. His hair needed attention and he hadn't shaved in a few days, but he was obviously in a better form than he had experienced in the past year. Confusion turned to a demonstration of delight. Swift, who had prevented Fenway from leaving the stage with a clasp to the elbow, finally managed to restore silence.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he said, "I decided to come and get my trophy." He took it from Fenway's hands and there was more applause. "Sorry about the practical joke. I apologize for the pain I must have caused family and friends. It's possible I've caused even more by coming back." This raised a laugh. "But I wanted to make a point. I had to demonstrate how inappropriate recorded laughter can be, and what lies it tells about words that have been spoken.

"I know I broke the law by pretending to be dead. I hope the police will understand. Anyway, I'm back and I have ideas for a new series and I intend to get to work."

The best applause of the night followed this announcement.

"I'll be looking for a producer," Swift concluded. "I'd like it to be Tenny Fenway. With only one proviso—no forged laughter."

At their table, Karen Swift leaned close to her son. She was ashamed of what she was about to say but it had to be said. "I was just starting to enjoy being a widow."

"Tell *him* that," Jeremy said.

At a table across the salon, Louisa Wright-Harris turned her head and stared until she caught Karen Swift's eye. As the director left the stage with his award, the two women regarded each other with the deepest sympathy.

"Q"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DEPARTMENT OF "FIRST STORIES"

The "first story" #609 you are about to read has an Ingmar Bergman quality we think will fascinate you, as it did us. It was written by Randye Lordon, whose background is in the theater. Originally from Chicago, she now lives in New York, where her play, "Dear Mrs. Attison," was produced in the Village this past year . . .

THE HOUSE ON MARIGOLD HILL

by RANDYE LORDON

"In the distance you could hear the bluebirds."

"Bluejays." The young woman corrected the older woman.

"In the distance you could hear birds." Her head turned as if on a gyre. "Then, from out of nowhere came the piercing scream."

"Yes. Shattering." Sheepish eyes agreeing, lids lowered in slave-like submission. Silence.

Pipe smoke filtered overhead. A nod to continue.

"It was a woman. Most definitely. Terrifying." She paused and motioned for a refill of her watered-down gin. "However, it was also somewhat exciting. I know that sounds peculiar." She shrugged. "Nonetheless, what happened at that point had the same feel I imagine the beginning of the world had. Dead silence for a moment, and then, as if on cue, the birds took to the air. It was breathtaking."

"Yes. A stunning display of color and unity." The gin splashed onto the tabletop. A sleeve kissed up the droplets.

"Continue." The young man's voice filled the room while his smoke-rings floated aimlessly in the air. He stared at the old woman as she sipped her drink.

"One could have easily forgotten the scream which had evoked

© 1984 by Randye Lordon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

such a response from the birds—one would rather like to forget such a memory—but it came again."

"Again?" His gentle eyes came alive as he shifted in his seat.

"Not quite the same as before." Her antiquated wheelchair creaked as she carefully placed her glass upon the coaster.

"A wail," the young woman volunteered almost wistfully from the far side of the room.

"A moan. A prolonged, mournful moan." She paused to hear her words. "It was then I suggested we call the authorities."

"It was my suggestion."

"No matter." She stole an apologetic glance at the detective. "I had thought of inspecting the woods myself—but, as you see, that is quite impossible." She lifted her hands from the arms of her prison and gestured.

"Yes, quite." He rose, his knee cracking in the process, and squinted through the spotless windows at the progress outside. "Is it possible one might gain access to these grounds unnoticed?"

"My good man, anything is possible. Surely you're not unaware of the Halloween Dare?" Her eyes sparkled with a bit of mischief. He was well aware of the dare. In order for a young boy to prove his bravery to his peers, he had to touch the house on Marigold Hill sometime during the night after the moon had slid behind the clouds. A small laugh escaped her as she watched a slight blush come to his smooth cheeks.

He turned away from her. The watery sucking from his pipe, long since doused, scratched through the silence. "It appears as though my men have not yet found your woman."

"My woman?" Her tone arched with her eyebrow.

"Take no offense madam. It's just a term, nothing more." A match found, sucking to life ashes in the bowl. He averted her stare and glanced through the window again. His assistant was motioning for his attendance. "If you will excuse me a moment?" A nod, and then his large frame ducking out from the sunlit room.

The footsteps of men thrashing about in the woods excused the occasional outburst of resentment from the birds.

"He's young, isn't he?" She sipped her gin and smiled vaguely.

"He's not what I expected." The young woman leaned against the wall.

"I want to look out of the window."

"Certainly." Her whitened knuckles grasped the handles of the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wheelchair and pushed it toward the windows facing the duck pond and water-well. The policemen had pried the boards from the unused well and left the slats propped against the moss-covered stone. The detective was conferring with another man. Their gestures revealed nothing to the women. They stood beside the marigolds, which were in bloom.

"It is exciting." Steel-grey eyes taking it all in, dispassion etched on the alabastrine matron's gentle face.

"Yes."

"Enough."

She was steered away from the window and led back to her table and gin.

His large body filled the doorframe. Again he ducked without need. "Ladies?" The two peahens turned in unison. "My men can't seem to find anything. No recent footprints, no apparent disturbance on the grounds at all."

"How very odd. I assure you, we heard what we heard."

"Oh, yes." The younger woman's very plain face appeared comical bobbing in agreement.

"I don't doubt that, ladies. But sometimes, especially out in a fairly deserted area, our ears have a way of playing tricks on us. I really don't think you have anything to worry about. If you like, I can keep a man posted here for a few hours."

"That won't be necessary." Her cold response sent a chill through the man's spine. A nod of her head signaled the young woman that she was finished with the detective.

"We're sorry to have taken up your time, officer." Her shy eyes averted his stare. "I'll see you to the door." Silently, she scurried past him into the corridor.

"I heard what I heard." A piercing glare.

"I believe that." His soft brown eyes tried to assure her that he understood. "Sometimes loneliness has a way of calling out to us." He ducked through the doorway and was gone.

She sat erect, unable to take her eyes from the doorway. Carefully, almost absent-mindedly, she replaced a strand of her silver-white hair which had fallen loose from her chignon. She wheeled herself toward the windows in time to see the last slat being replaced on the water-well. "Just as I thought," she muttered under breath. She cocked her head as she heard the young woman re-enter the room. "Have they left?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"They're leaving." Her voice was hollow and low. "What did he say?"

"Just as I thought." Outside, they could hear the engines of the officers' cars racing away. "They didn't believe a word of it. Just two lonely ladies looking for an afternoon of excitement."

"Well, it has been stimulating." She poured herself a cognac as she stifled a smile.

"I didn't know you drank cognac."

"There's a lot about me you know nothing of, Mother." Her mild accusation hung in the air untouched.

"Well, as you say, it has been a stimulating afternoon." Regal upon her throne, the older woman wheeled herself back toward the table where she had left the last of her drink. She then, in one unladylike swallow, downed her gin. She closed her eyes, squeezing the lids tight together as if to ward off the burning in her throat. "They'll never find her."

"I expect not." A smile washed over her eyes and mouth, sensual in the excitement. "We might have made it easier for them."

"Can you fault an old lady for a questionable memory?" She rose and walked over to the liquor cabinet, her glass in hand. "Selfish old fool." She muttered to herself as she poured another gin.

"Tell me something." The young woman sank into the sofa. "If you could travel back in time, would you do it again?"

"How far back in time? There are any number of things I would change given the opportunity." The excitement of the day was having its effect on the elegant older woman.

"A year." She slipped off her shoes and tucked her feet underneath her.

She settled back into the wheelchair and sighed. "Yes, I imagine I would. I see it as justice after many years of injustice. Your Aunt Mona was evil to the core." She stopped, her watery eyes seeming to gaze into the past. "She manipulated everyone, everything around her. Took away from me the only things that ever mattered. All with a shrug—as though she were taking nothing more than a favorite hair-ribbon." She held her breath for a moment. "She took you away from me because it was 'improper.' And then she took Lew. All with a shrug."

"Well, then—congratulations." A raised glass. "To us, to our dear detective, and to Mona." Hatred flashed through her eyes for a moment and was gone.

"It did work, didn't it?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Strange, though." She rose gracefully to refill her glass.

"What's that?"

"Everything, really. The whole sequence of events. That I should find you after all those years. That we should come together and—commit a murder." She took a deep breath. "Nobody will ever know Mona's gone. Actually, that's kind of sad when you think about it."

They both heard the car coming up the drive. The older woman snapped to attention in her chair. The younger woman set her drink down and crossed over for her shoes. She left the room without a word.

From Mona's wheelchair the older woman could hear voices at the door, muted and cordial. She glanced up and saw the detective ducking in the doorway. "I'm sorry to disturb you—"

"That's quite all right. Have you found something?"

"No, actually I've left something. I believe it's over there." He motioned towards the windows. She nodded and he awkwardly crossed the room. The young woman stood in the doorway ready to escort the detective out again.

"Ah, here it is." He took something from the window ledge.

"Is it your pipe? I know how men become attached to their pipes."

"No. A tape recorder. I'm terribly forgetful sometimes."

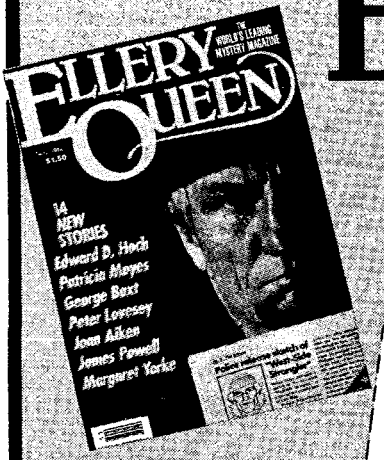
"Ah, yes. Well, I can certainly sympathize with you on that issue." She paused and glanced at his hand holding the recorder. "Tell me, detective, was it on?"

The birds sang their evening song as the lavender-pink sun settled softly on Marigold Hill.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MYSTERY READERS...
PLAY THE TRUMP CARD WITH

ELLERY QUEEN
THE WORLD'S LEADING MYSTERY MAGAZINE



CONSULT Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine every month and UNCOVER the world of daring crimes, challenging intrigues, and first-class detection.

SNARE villains, spies and counterspies from the clues expertly tucked between the action-packed pages of the world's leading mystery magazine.
In each issue a newsletter reports and reviews the latest mystery events in TV, movies and books.

And **THERE IS MORE!**

Exclusive point-blank interviews with top-ranking crime writers like John Mortimer, Robert B. Parker and Nedra Tyre..

MAKE YOUR BEST MOVE by mailing the attached coupon today, and get 12 entertaining issues for the unbeatable price of $14.97.

Q♠

ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE
P.O. BOX 1930 · MARION OH · 43305

Send me 12 issues of EQMM for ONLY $14.97! I save $6.03 off the $21.00 newsstand price.

☐ Bill me later
☐ Payment Enclosed

Name _____

Address _____ Apt. _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

OR CALL TOLL FREE 1-800-247-2160 (In IOWA call 1-800-362-2860)

PLEASE ALLOW 6 TO 8 WEEKS FOR YOUR FIRST ISSUE

D4E31

♥Q

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* Dr. Sam: Johnson story by

LILLIAN de la TORRE

As we go to press with this first new Dr. Sam: Johnson story in over three years, we have learned that International Polygonics will be reissuing the first two collections of Dr. Sam stories and publishing two volumes of previously uncollected Dr. Sam stories. Wonderful news for Lillian de la Torre fans, wonderful news for lovers of the mystery short story.

The following compelling tale will lead off the fourth volume of these high-quality paperbacks . . .

THE KIDNAPP'D EARL

(as told by James Boswell, June–July, 1763)

by LILLIAN de la TORRE

"Detector of crime and chicane I may be, sir; but," said Dr. Sam: Johnson in his resonant emphatick voice, "but, sir, I am no catchpoll!"

We sat at our ease over breakfast in Dr. Sam: Johnson's snug chambers in Inner Temple Lane. The apartment we sat in was equipped with furnishings that were like their proprietor, old but stout. On the plain walnut-tree table our repast was set out, to which Dr. Johnson had done full justice, having imbibed fully thirteen cups of tea. His chair pushed back, he sat now, in his plain snuff-coloured full-skirted coat, his old-fashioned square-toed shoes without buckles, his little brown scratch-wig perched exiguously above his strong-cut countenance with its look of an antient statue, replete, gently smiling.

How I rejoiced to be here, on such comfortable terms with the Great Cham of Literature! I had but recently come up to London,

© 1984 by Lillian de la Torre.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an eager Scots lad of twenty-two, my heart set on winning my way into the friendship of this famous man whose noble writings I so much admired; and lo! here I sat at his breakfast table!

Nay more, not a month since I had been privileged to observe in Bayfield Court the workings of his mighty intellect in an affair of triple murder locked in. To this event I now alluded.

BOSWELL: You may be no catchpoll, sir, yet you handed over the Bayfield Court murderer to the watch.

JOHNSON: Yes, sir, I did so. If murder is done, as it were, under my nose, then the killer must pay, and I will see that he is detected. The puzzle engages the intellect, the solution calls upon the ingenuity; but the killer, by his unhappy fate, touches the heart. It is no light matter.

But, sir, (he went on) I take no delight in affairs of blood. To look into deeds of violence is to look into the heart of human misery. It gives an awful solemn warning: There but for the grace of GOD goes Sam: Johnson; but it does not raise my curiosity nor afford me amusement as do lesser deeds of eccentricity and chicanery.

But most of all, sir, it is my pleasure to right wrongs. The world is full of chicanery, some of it harmless, but too much of it designed to cheat the hapless. Such chicanery I will detect and baffle if I can.

BOSWELL: Then, sir, you must feel strongly drawn to the plight of the Kidnapped Earl.

JOHNSON: Why, sir, I have seen some such catch-phrase bandied about in the publick prints, but as to its meaning I am not instructed.

BOSWELL: The Kidnapped Earl, sir, as I read by the papers, is the rightful Earl of Angleby, who was kidnapped as a boy by his wicked Uncle Richard, and shipped to the Colonies for a bond-slave, that his uncle, the next heir, might slip into the Earldom; which he has done, and enjoys it till now undisturbed. Is not that a tale of chicanery indeed?

JOHNSON: It is so, sir, but on whose part?

BOSWELL: Why, sir, wicked Uncle Richard.

JOHNSON: May be, sir. Or maybe not. There have been false claimants before now. Let the courts decide between them.

Certain people of importance arriving at this moment, no more was said of the Kidnapped Earl for that time.

It was ever thus at No. 1 Inner Temple Lane. Rarely did I have him to myself. He seemed to be considered as a kind of publick oracle, whom everybody thought they had the right to visit and consult.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thus it fell out that one midday in June, as we sat in converse together, Frank Barber, his Jamaican black boy, announced a trio of visitors, who presented themselves thus:

"Your servant, Mr. Johnson, Dougal MacArcher, advocate, yours to command." The speaker executed a ceremonious obeisance, a wiry personage of middle stature, clad in modish gold-laced sage-coloured brocade, his green eyes alert under tawny brows, his composed countenance lent a touch of the whimsical by a definitely turned-up nose.

"I present my young friends: Lady Lalage Fitzcharles, the Duke's daughter of Westermark—"

The Duke's daughter dimpled and dropped a curtsey. I observed her dark curls simply dressed, her direct hazel eyes full of life and fire, her short upper lip quirked in a smile, and I longed to be a knight-errant for her.

Her knight-errant was already making his bow, a tall young man wearing his blond curls simply tied at the nape, whose far-seeing blue eyes and comely features were given distinction by a superbly high Roman nose.

"—and my friend James Ansley, who would be Earl of Angleby if right would take place."

The Kidnapped Earl! I listened with all my ears as he burst impetuously into speech.

"Knowing, Mr. Johnson, your wisdom and willingness to help, I make bold to enlist your aid."

"You shall have it, sir. Pray be seated and let me know the nature of your difficulty."

Frank set out chairs, and reluctantly withdrew. James Ansley took up his tale.

ANSLEY: In a word, my difficulty is this: Am I a bastard?

JOHNSON: Nay, sir, how can I tell? Let us have your story in order.

ANSLEY: Then thus it is. I was born at Dalmain in County Wexford, so much is certain. My father, Lord Eltham, was next heir to the old Earl of Angleby, and my mother was Moll Barfield, the Duke's daughter of Bredingham. At birth I was put out to nurse to Jiggy Landry, the kitchen maid. I never knew my mother, for my father, who was a captious man, put her to the door before I came home from Jiggy.

JOHNSON: Put her to the door!

MACARCHER: For adultery, he said. Thence flow our difficulties.

ANSLEY: Well, sir, at four I was brought home from Jiggy's and bred up in the great house. My father made much of me, bragging it

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about that I was his true-born son and next heir to the Earldom. I had a little hat with a feather, and a fine pony named Hannover, and lived in clover. But all too soon my fortunes changed. My father went up to Dublin, and took a mistress, who did not fancy me, and so worked upon him, that I was soon turned out of doors to fend for myself in the streets.

LADY LALAGE: Alack, inhuman father!

ANSLEY (smiling): I slept under bulks and in doorways, I cadged my scram where I could. 'Twas not a bad life for a sturdy gossoon. But then my father died, thoughtlessly as he had lived, and made no provision for me. My Uncle Richard at once seized his goods and his papers, and smoothly slipped into his estate. But it irked him to see me ragged in the streets, and hear people muttering that he had stolen my birthright, so he put his rapparees on my trail, and in short, one day they cornered me and hustled me aboard ship for America, there to be sold as a bond-slave.

I was fourteen years in servitude, often running way, as often brought back to serve a lengthened term. But at last I got clear away, and made for the port. There I found His Majesty's fireship *Dragon* fitting for sea, and 'listed aboard her. Oh, sir, we did prodigies at the taking of the Havannah! But a shipmate knew me for old Angleby's heir, and hailed me as the new Earl. The officers took up my cause, fitted me out, obtained my discharge, and shipped me home to wrest my Earldom from my wicked uncle.

JOHNSON: One foremast hand against the world! What could you hope for?

ANSLEY: At first I was all at sea. My kinfolk would not countenance me. But by the goodness of Providence I found a friend to support me, a man of law, a man of substance, named Dougal MacArcher. Behold, sir, the best friend a man ever had!

MACARCHER (smiling): Never deserved a man more! Well, sir, we have matters in hand. We have gathered witnesses in Ireland, Jiggy Landry and the rest, who were to the fore at milady's lying-in, we have even the pandours who kidnapped the lad, to say it was done at his wicked uncle's bidding.

JOHNSON: What says wicked uncle to all this?

MACARCHER: He says the lad is only his brother's bastard by the kitchen wench, and he did him a service, forsooth, in sending him to America and thus saving him from the gallows in Dublin!

BOSWELL (hotly): A mighty service truly!

MACARCHER: And meanwhile he goes about to do away with him.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG.
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

JOHNSON: Do away with him!
MACARCHER: He sets on him blunderbusmen and assassins. He rides him down with his coach and six. At Newmarket race-meeting the juggernaut coachman pursues him all over the course—
JOHNSON: Pretty proceedings for an Earl, truly!
MACARCHER: But we have baffled him, and still shall do. Our cause is on the calendar this very Trinity term, and I doubt not we shall strip the black Earl of his ill-gotten honors!
JOHNSON: I congratulate you, sir. It hardly appears you have need of my counsel.
MACARCHER: Why, sir, I do not think we do. But James has taken a foolish notion—
ANSLEY: How, foolish? Here am I, a rough foremast hand—
MACARCHER: Nay, dear boy, under my tutelage you are taking a nice polish—polite literature, the play, the sights of the town—
ANSLEY: I say a rough foremast hand. And yet I have won my heart's desire, Lady Lalage has consented to be mine. (The girl reached him a white hand, and he took it gently.) Now this cannot be, that the bastard of a serving-wench shall sully the line of the noble Dukes of Westermark. Unless I can *know* for certain that I am no bastard, I cannot do this thing. I will drop my suit and bid my lady farewell, and go back to the sea.
LADY LALAGE: No, James! I will not be dropped!
ANSLEY: I will go back to the sea. Well, Mr. Johnson, what do you say? Can you help me to certainty?
JOHNSON: Sir, I will be plain with you. Your story may be true. But were I to set up for the heir to an Earldom, I would invent just such a tale, a romantick story of trepanning and servitude and heroism before the Havannah and attempts at assassination—
ANSLEY (stiffly): It is true, sir.
JOHNSON: Then the court will so decide. My counsel is this, sir, that you await the issue before you take to the sea.
LADE LALAGE: James, I beg you—
MACARCHER: James, you cannot thus reduce all my effort and expence to a cypher—
BOSWELL: Do, sir, be perswaded—
ANSLEY: I will wait.
MACARCHER: Brave boy!
ANSLEY: Three days.

On the evening following our conference with the kidnapped Earl,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

my learned companion carried me across the Thames to Vauxhall Gardens, whither all the fashionable world was wont to resort in summer to hear the nightingale sing. Part of a plan (I wondered) to give this rustical Scot "a fine polish" such as Mr. MacArcher was giving his rough sailor? Or just the nostalgia for nightingales that comes over Londoners in June?

I leaned the more to the former theory when in the modish throng I glimpsed none other than Dougal MacArcher himself with his sailor in tow, clearly in process of polishing.

Whether for polish or pleasure, we were in gallant frame as we enjoyed the gardens, Johnson ponderous in his mighty wig of state fresh-powdered, I with my bloom-coloured coat setting off, as I fancied, my neat frame and alert countenance. We strolled in the verdant allees, admired Roubiliac's statue of Handel while listening to his musick, took a syllabub, heard the nightingales sing, and came away by moonlight well pleased with our entertainment.

It was our intent on this bright moonlit night to stroll down to the river and so go home by water. But barely had we turned a corner, when the air was rent with the clash of steel and the oaths of combatants.

"An affair of honour!" I cried eagerly.

"Say rather a general brawl," said Johnson, pausing to observe the melee.

By the bright moonlight I made out two paladins fighting back to back, set upon by a quartet of ill-looking rapparees. The shorter paladin was a nimble and deft swordsman. His tall ally used his sword like a cutlass, swinging and slashing in wild sweeps. I looked again, and saw that the cutlass-wielder was able seaman James Ansley, and the duellist was Dougal MacArcher.

While I was still staring, my intrepid friend had taken in the situation, and with instant resolution had gripped his stout oaken stick and waded into the fray. I drew my sword to second him, but there was no need, for in less time than it takes to tell it, the embattled scholar had laid about the four rapparees with his mighty stick, cracking the crown of one of them, sending flying the weapon of the second, knocking the breath out of the third, and collaring the fourth as his comrades took to their heels.

"What's the meaning of this, fellow?" he demanded, shaking his captive as a mastiff might shake a rat.

"Unhand me, old poot!" shrilled his victim, "or it will be the worse for you, for I am the Earl's man!"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"What Earl? Of Angleby perhaps?"

"He. So look to it, old square-toes, and don't put your nose in his fist!"

"And where is the noble Earl? Nearby, no doubt?"

"Yonder he sits in his coach."

"Be off with you!" cried his captor, propelling him none too gently in the opposite direction.

Shaking off the thanks of our friends, he strode directly to where a coach stood against a clump of trees.

"A word with you, my Lord."

A face came scowling out of the window into the moonlight, dusky yellow of hue, thin and deeply furrowed with down-turning lines, dark bushy brows scowling over little snapping black eyes—no wonder Dougal MacArcher had called him the Black Earl!

"What's the meaning of this," he snarled, "that you interfere with my servants in the performance of their duties?"

"Pray say, my Lord," rejoined Johnson calmly, "whether you consider one of their duties to be assassinating your nephew?"

At this the Black Earl fell a-cursing: "A rogue, a bastard, a scoundrel! An impostor, my brother's by-blow, that seeks to rob his own kinsman!"

"If he is indeed your brother's by-blow, my Lord," replied Johnson, "and not the true Earl, the law will soon discover it. You need not set assassins on him. I must warn you, sir, by these violent proceedings you betray yourself, that you know your cause is bad."

"No man's cause is bad," sneered the Black Earl, "who has ten thousand pounds a year."

"Of another man's money."

"What's that to you?" snapped the Earl. "I warn you, old fustylugs, take your thick nose out of my business, or 'twill be the worse for you. Who do you think you are, to bandy words with an Earl?"

"I am Sam: Johnson."

"Save us, the lexicographer! Will you *word* me to death? I defy words, and be d-mned to you!"

"Then have deeds. Be sure, my Lord, I will do my best endeavour to see that James Ansley is enabled to prove his legitimacy!"

"Bah! I'll parley no longer. Drive on, coachman!"

The juggernaut coachman snapped his whip, and the equipage started with a jerk so reckless I barely stepped back in time.

During this colloquy, the rest of our party had been busy setting themselves to rights, sheathing their weapons, staunching a super-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ficial scratch or two—but not too busy to take in every word spoken. James Ansley was jubilant.

"Now, sir," he cried, "you know my uncle. Am I a bastard?"

"I have sworn to prove that you are not," said Johnson drily. "You must assist me. Pray come to Inner Temple Lane in the morning betimes, and bring all your papers—"

"Alack, sir, we have no papers. All are in the hands of the Black Earl."

"Bring what you can, but come. You too, Mr. Boswell."

With this, by common consent we began to escort our friends to the river, and so made our way home by water with no further incident.

Life at Inner Temple Lane began unwontedly early the next day. The tea things were cleared when the Ansley party presented themselves, Lady Lalage among them.

"I grieved so, Mr. Johnson," said she, "that by reason of other concerns I could not be with James to hear the nightingale sing, and I grieve the more now I know what passed, for my presence might have prevented it."

"You might have come to harm, milady, for the Black Earl's bully-huffs respect neither man, woman, nor beast. But we'll be up with them yet! Come, gentlemen, your papers."

It was a thin sheaf that Mr. MacArcher proffered, laying them out on the walnut-tree table one after one, with a commentary.

"The affidavit of Jiggy Landry that James Ansley, her nursling, is Milady Eltham's son. Her cousin Paddy, that he was the groom sent galloping for the midwife. Her sister Biddy, that she was the scullery maid that fetched hot water and saw the babe born of Lady Eltham with her own eyes . . ."

Johnson shook his head.

"Alack, sirs, what odds that the whole Landry connection will not lie to make their kinsman an Earl? Where is the midwife?"

"Not found, sir."

"Lady Eltham's physician?"

"Long since dead."

"The clergyman who christened the heir?"

"Dead, too. 'Tis over twenty-five years ago."

"The parish register, then?"

"Nothing in it, 'twas but ill kept."

"We must find better evidence, sir," said Dr. Johnson, frowning.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Come, a family resemblance? Does James Ansley resemble his father?"

"His father is dead this twenty years," said Mr. MacArcher.

"There's no hope there," said James Ansley with a smile. "My father and my uncle were two of a kind, little, black, and loud; and you will not say I resemble my uncle?"

"Heaven forfend!" cried Lady Lalage.

"Then, sir, your mother?"

"Folks that knew her have thought to see a resemblance; but she is gone, how to prove it?"

"Come, my friends," said Dr. Johnson, rising decisively, "let us go."

"Go? Whither?"

"To call upon your mother's kin."

Shepherded by Dr. Johnson, our little party ascended a hackney coach, clattered westward, and descended at Westminster Abbey. There our guide led us to an ornate monument, and paused before it. On it we beheld the deceased, clad in a marble toga, kneeling before his own cenotaph, regarding without surprise a mixed entourage of mourners and angels: Sacred to the Memory of JOHN BARFIELD, first Duke of BREDINGHAM.

"Your grandfather, Mr. Ansley."

Eagerly we scanned the marble lineaments, a handsome face enough, but more Greek than Roman. Try as we would, we could not see in it anything of James Ansley.

"I fear, sir," said Johnson, "that the Duke your grandfather affords us no assistance. Well, come, follow me."

He hailed a passing verger, who pointed us the way.

" 'Tis a main narrow stair for the lady," he offered, dubiously regarding milady's modish draperies.

"No matter, I'll climb any stair," cried Lady Lalage, "if justice for James is at the top." She reached him her hand.

It was a narrow stair most like a ladder, behind the panels of Henry the Seventh's chapel, and it led to a dusty chamber above. There we found an equally dusty old verger in charge, and ranged about the walls loomed the dusky visages of personages richly clad. It was like being surrounded by ghosts.

At once the old verger began as if by rote to recite:

"Pray step in, sirs and madam, and attend me. You must know, milady and gentlemen all, that in a former age it was the custom to exhibit the deceased on a catafalque at his obsequies. But some-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

times it would not do, for corruption, you take me, sir, and a waxen effigy came to be substituted. When the custom fell out of use, the effigies were tumbled together in this attick, and they have only recently been rediscovered, set to rights, and put on shew. (pointing) King Charles the Second—"

Kingly in his royal robes, a full black periwig above a swarthy waxen countenance.

"Queen Anne—"

A sweet face, a robe studded with glass gems. "Her Grace the Duchess of Bredingham—"

At her we looked with quickened attention, but read nothing in her regular features.

"Milady Duchess favoured the old ways, as you see, and most especially when her son, the second Duke, died on his travels in Italy, she took the greatest care that the effigy on his catafalque should be a true likeness in every respect. Yonder he lies, the second Duke of Bredingham, exactly as he was in life—"

Recumbent, we had overlooked him. There he lay on his catafalque in his ducal robes—James Ansley to the life! Someone gasped, and Lady Lalage threw her arms impulsively around the claimant's neck. "Now we can marry!" she cried.

"Past doubt this Duke is my uncle," said young Ansley slowly. "Now we *can* marry, my love."

They clung oblivious, while the rest of us stared at the waxen image. There were the blond curls, the tawny brows, and lashes meticulously formed of real human hair in two carefully chosen shades of pale brown, the sensitive mouth, the well-formed chin, most convincing the superbly high Roman nose. Dr. Johnson had found his proof. We fee'd the verger lavishly, and came away rejoicing.

For some ten days thereafter, I neglected my respected friend's company, my time being taken up in raking with Mr. Wilkes and the wits, and—alas that I must say it!—dallying with low wenches. But on a warm July day, in better frame, I called again in Inner Temple Lane. There I found Dr. Johnson sitting over the teapot with the Kidnapped Earl and his company, in high good humour.

"Welcome, Mr. Boswell," said he. "You come in good time, for we have need of you."

"The Ansley cause comes up at the King's Bench on Monday,"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

exclaimed Dougal MacArcher exultantly. "The Black Earl's time of reckoning has come!"

"My good friends here would have me go down to Westminster Hall to watch the proceedings," said Dr. Johnson, "but you know, sir, this is quite contrary to my way of life—"

I knew it well, for the sturdy philosopher would scarce rise before noon, or go abroad before four of the clock.

"And so I have selected you, Mr. Boswell, to be my deputy, for I hardly suppose you will miss this entertainment."

"Not likely, sir, for I count myself fortunate to be able to see this great cause tried before I proceed to my law studies in Utrecht."

"And in recompense, Mr. Boswell, you shall dine with me daily at the Mitre and report the day's proceedings."

"All's to a wish!" cried Lady Lalage, James Ansley wrung my hand, and so the plan was concerted.

Thus it came about that the next week, towards evening, Sam: Johnson and James Boswell sat at a table at the Mitre over a cut off the joint and a glass, and spoke of the Kidnapped Earl.

"A great day in court for the Ansley cause!" I reported. "You can picture, sir, the solemn scene at the King's Bench. On the bench sit three judges, gowned and periwigged, a little fidgety one, a big somnolent one, and in the middle a judge of god-like mien—"

"Lord Chief Justice Mansfield, Mr. Boswell, note him well."

"—and the jury is in the box, and at their long table sit the lawyers in their black gowns and white bands, and the crowd is everywhere, crammed to the walls. In the forefront sit the litigants, the old Earl and the 'young Earl,' the cynosure of all eyes. Now the crier calls order, and Dougal MacArcher rises to open his friend's case. How eloquently he pictures the plight of the friendless boy, inhumanly put out of his heritage by his wicked Uncle Richard! Ladies weep. Even James Ansley has a tear in his eye. Only the Black Earl sits sneering."

"And then, sir?"

"Then, sir, MacArcher and his juniors begin calling their witnesses. A score of honest Irish folk appear. They swear to my Lady's pregnancy and the birth of the heir. Some say they were present at the birth. Many good souls remember how they drank the heir's health at the christening.

"Then come others of the household, to tell of how my Lady left Dalmain under a cloud, how the child came home from nurse at

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jiggy Landry's, and was handsomely attired, made much of, and presented to all and sundry as the old Earl's heir."

"Why sir," said Dr. Johnson, "this is all to the good."

"But what emotion in court, sir, when Lord Eltham's serving-folk tell how the boy was turned out into the streets of Dublin! And even the pandours who kidnapped the boy were there to tell of it, and say it was at the behest of wicked Uncle Richard! 'You lie!' bawls Uncle Richard, and is rebuked by the judge. Last comes a sailorman who met James Ansley in the backwoods of Pennsylvania, clad in skins, and knows him now for the same man. The plaintiff rests.

"In a word, sir, the tide is high for James Ansley. The spectators, even the judges, look on him with compassion, and when the court rises, the claimant is cheered to the echo, and the Black Earl is hissed to his coach!"

"So far so good; let us see what the morrow will bring," says Dr. Johnson, and calls for the reckoning.

"Well, sir, how goes James Ansley's cause?" enquired Dr. Johnson next day over a mighty dish of collops at the Mitre.

"Alack, sir, the tide runs counter. The Black Earl has had his day. Dougal MacArcher had brought Jiggy and the rest of the under servants to attest James Ansley's birth. Now come all the upper servants to swear for the Earl there was no such birth. So say the butler and my Lord's valet, and worst of all my Lady's own confidential woman. She avers with vehemence that Lady Eltham never had a child. So say the Ansley kin to a man, and certain it is the late Earl of Angleby never knew Lord Eltham had an heir. Much harm is done to the Ansley cause. When the defence rested, the crowd was beginning to look askance at James Ansley.

"What is to be done?"

"The truth must be made visible," said my friend thoughtfully, pushing back his plate and rising.

I presented myself at Westminster Hall early the next morning, with a sense of impending crisis. This was the day appointed for the claimant's rebuttal witnesses. Would they prevail?

Again the spacious chamber was packed to the doors when to the crier's piercing "Oyez!" the judges in their velvet-trimmed gowns paced to the bench. On one side, James Ansley in his mulberry brocade sat smiling, Lady Lalage's hand in his. On the other side, the old Earl bent his black brows and twisted his thin lip in his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

accustomed sneer. At the long table before the bar, like a flock of blackbirds, sat the lawyers, leaders, and juniors in a row. Dougal MacArcher at one end sat on the edge of his chair, his green eyes snapping, ready for the fray. At the other end Earl Richard's advocate sat solid, Serjeant Grimthorpe, a lowering mastiff of a man whose hectoring bull's roar had discomposed many an Ansley witness.

I too was on the edge of my seat when Dougal MacArcher sprang to his feet and began to call his rebuttal witnesses. Someone called the butler a liar. Someone else called the valet a liar. Dougal MacArcher spun them along mechanically, his air of excited expectancy seeming to look beyond them. Soon an attendant handed him a folded billet. He took a single look and dismissed his witness half heard. "And now!" he cried in ringing tones, "now, my Lords, I call into court Edmund Barfield, second Duke of Bredingham, Lady Eltham's brother and own uncle to James Ansley!"

Instantly pandemonium burst forth, everyone shouting at once. In the din Dr. Sam: Johnson came marching up the aisle, and the wax-work Duke seemed to march with him, supported on the one side by Dr. Johnson, and on the other by Frank Barber, who rolled his dark eyes in terror, yet strode manfully forward.

"You cannot call a dead man into court!" the Earl's lawyer was bellowing. At the same moment Earl Richard, squinting at the waxen face, started up and began to bawl: "You cannot call James Ansley, he is an interested party, he is incompetent!"

"Sit down, you fool!—uh, my Lord—" hissed Serjeant Grimthorpe furiously, "you give your cause away, this is not James Ansley, but a wax-work of his uncle—uh, that is—(aloud with a roar) I submit, my Lords, they cannot call a wax-work into court!"

"My learned friend is quite correct, my Lords," said Dougal MacArcher smoothly, well pleased with his effect. "I withdraw the witness, and I call Samuel Johnson!"

Johnson was already on the stand, supporting the waxen Duke at his side. He took the oath with measured and solemn sonority. In emphatick tones, while the packed court-room stared at his waxen companion, he proceeded to account for the history of the Ducal effigy, so carefully crafted to be an exact likeness of my Lady Eltham's brother.

"James Ansley, stand up!"

At MacArcher's bidding, the young man rose in his place.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Come forward." The claimant stood on the stand beside the figure of his uncle. The likeness was inescapable.

"Now, my Lords and gentlemen of the jury," cried Dougal MacArcher, "if we take the nobleman's robe and place it upon James Ansley's shoulders (doing so with a flourish), and the coronet upon his head—behold the rightful Earl of Angleby!"

The crowd broke into irrepressible applause. No protests from the bar, no repression from the bench, could quell it. It was all over. The lawyer's closing arguments, the judges' summing up, unheard, were hastily cut short. The jury rushed through their verdict:

"We find for the Plaintiff!"

They assessed costs against the usurping Earl, but nobody heard it for cheering.

Cheers were still ringing in our ears, the hearty handshake of the new Earl still tingled on our palms, Lady Lalage's kisses still burned on my cheek, when at last my friend and I drew breath at the Mitre.

"And thus was the truth made visible," observed Dr. Johnson with a smile.

"It was well played, sir," I replied, "but pray, sir, tell me one thing: How did you know that there was a portrait of Duke Bredingham among the Westminster wax-works?"

JOHNSON: By reading, sir, how else? There's a book newly published, how the wax-works are found and put to rights and may be seen for sixpence, and a list of them added.

BOSWELL: And how did you manage to spirit the waxen Earl from his appointed home in the Abbey?

JOHNSON: With the utmost simplicity, sir. I subpoenaed it.

BOSWELL: What, my Lord Chief Justice issued a subpoena for such a toy?

JOHNSON: Well, no, sir. But I can make a writ as impressive as any Lord Chief Justice in the land.

BOSWELL: But your writ will not run.

JOHNSON: Did the honest verger know that? He looked with big eyes at the inky flourishes and the waxen seals, and hastened to give over the Earl, catafalque and all. Nay, he lent a hand to transfer it from his attick to the cart I had provided. Thus Frank and I carted the noble Duke like a malefactor to the court, and the rest you know.

BOSWELL: So James Ansley has come into his patrimony.

JOHNSON: His patrimony? With his blond hair and high nose, James Ansley is certainly his uncle's nephew and his mother's son. But

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

when you think of the Ansley cause, think of this: 'Tis a wise child that knows his own father!

Author's Comment

The notorious cause of Annesley versus Anglesey was tried at Dublin in November, 1743. In this story I tell it substantially as it happened, only simplifying some of its intolerable complexities and changing the date and the locale to permit the involvement of Johnson and Boswell.

The Kidnapped Earl won his suit. But real life is seldom so neat, or so just, as fiction. Richard, Earl of Anglesey, may or may not have been a usurper, but he was wicked enough. He was accused of being a dog-stealer and an amateur highwayman, and he was certainly a triple bigamist. He was skilled at infragrant legal chicanery, and managed with one dodge or another to delay judgment so long that when James Annesley died twenty years later, the case was still in the courts. Swiftly afterwards died his two young sons, James Annesley's line died with them, and the rightful heir who was left was—wicked Uncle Richard! It makes one wonder whether the Black Earl was not as quick with a poison dose as with a kidnapping and a juggernaut coach and six.

Dr. Johnson's prowess with his oaken stick is not exaggerated. Boswell in the *Life of Johnson* gives many examples of his utter fearlessness and physical might, and the routing of the Earl's rapparees is based on one of them.

At the time of this story, Sam: Johnson was not yet "Dr. Johnson." His first doctorate came to him in 1765 from Trinity College, Dublin. But it would be awkward not to call him by the name we all know, "Dr. Sam: Johnson"; which I have accordingly used in the text.

The wax-work Duke is still to be seen at Westminster Abbey, along with his royal companions, but now you need not climb a back stair to Henry the Seventh's attic to see him, for he has found a more suitable home in a room off the cloister. There he lies in state in his robe and coronet, James Annesley to the life: which you may prove to yourself if you will compare him with the engraved portrait of James Annesley which forms the frontispiece of the small quarto edition of the trial (London: R. Walker, 1744).

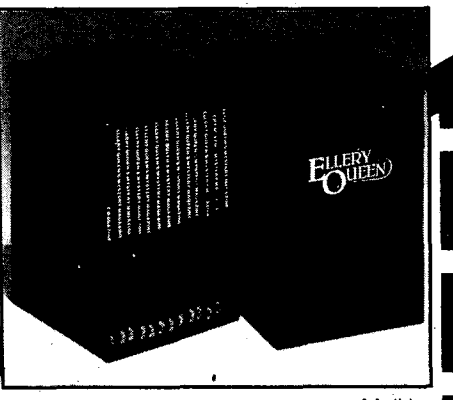
For a full-scale account of the affair of the Kidnapped Earl, you will have to wait for my book, *The Annesley Trials,* now in preparation.

—Lillian de la Torre

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A NEW CASE FOR MYSTERIES... THE PERFECT COVER-UP ...ATTRACTIVE LIBRARY CASES... NOW *ONLY* $5.95

NOW.....PRESERVE your issues of **ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE** easily and attractively in custom designed Library Cases. Each case holds up to 13 issues (1 year) of your magazine. Embossed with the **ELLERY QUEEN** title in gold lettering and bound in a handsome burgundy leatherette, this **ELLERY QUEEN** case will provide a safe home for your publications so they will remain perfectly unblemished and fresh—your marvelous and personal yearly collection.



DON'T MISS THIS TREMENDOUS VALUE... ONLY $5.95!

SATISFACTION UNCONDITIONALLY GUARANTEED OR YOUR MONEY BACK. To order fill out the coupon below.

Mail to:
JESSE JONES INDUSTRIES
(Established in 1843)
P.O. Box 5120 • Department DAV
Philadelphia, PA 19141

ENDOUS LUE!

THE WORLD'S LEADING MYSTERY MAGAZINE
ELLERY QUEEN

YES, I would like to be the owner of **ELLERY QUEEN LIBRARY CASES.**

☐ (1) file case at $5.95 ☐ (3) file cases at $17.00
☐ (6) file cases for $30.00 *(Save $5.70!)*
Postage, packing and handling are included.

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY STATE ZIP

Satisfaction guaranteed or your money refunded. Please allow 5 weeks for delivery. For orders outside the U.S. please add $2.50 per case—will accept U.S. funds only.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY NEWSLETTER

CRIME BEAT

by R. E. PORTER

FRENCH DETECTIVE STORIES: When most American readers reach for a mystery, it's generally by an American or British author. Mystery and detective stories in other languages are all too rarely translated into English, and we tend to forget they exist. But in France the semi-fictional memoirs of Vidocq actually predated Poe, and the novels of Gaboriau predated *The Moonstone* by Wilkie Collins. The first decade of this century saw such French mystery masterpieces as Maurice Leblanc's *Arsene Lupin* and Gaston Leroux's *The Mystery of the Yellow Room.*

When asked for a list of French mystery writers, the average reader today would name Georges Simenon—though he himself, of course, is Belgian—and probably stop there. Proof that the mystery still thrives in France comes from a new anthology published in England by Bodley Head. *Great French Detective Stories,* edited by T. J. Hale, does indeed contain stories by Simenon and Leblanc, but it also includes largely neglected writers like Pierre Véry and Léo Malet, neither of whom has had a book published in English.

While we wait for an American publisher to issue the Hale anthology, we can content ourselves with a fine new omnibus of Maigret novels from Georges Simenon. *Maigret Meets a Milord* (Penguin Books, $6.95 paper) contains the title novel along with two others, *Maigret and the Hundred Gibbets* and *Maigret and the Enigmatic Lett.* These novels, all published in France during 1931, were among the earliest that Simenon wrote about Maigret, and helped launch his worldwide popularity. It's good to have them back in print.

MORE ON HAMMETT: Diane Johnson's *Dashiell Hammett, A Life* (Random House, $17.95) opens with a chapter about his 1951 imprisonment for refusing to answer questions before a judge during a communist witch-hunt. This is a clear indication that the book will concern itself more with Hammett's life than with his writing, and especially with his life after publication of his last novel in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1934. About a third of the book is devoted to his early employment and his writing days, though the emphasis is on his five novels, with little mention of his pulp short stories.

Written with the cooperation of Hammett's longtime friend Lillian Hellman, the biography does include many letters and photos published for the first time, and it's an important supplement to the previously published Hammett biographies by Richard Layman and William F. Nolan. Especially interesting is one of the notes at the back of the book, which reports that Hammett's screen treatment for *Another Thin Man,* in M-G-M files, exists in the form of a short novel.

The prospect of an unpublished Hammett short novel should be enough to excite publishers and fans alike.

TV SLEUTHS: Authors have been known to react in different ways to the appearance of their popular detective characters on a regular television series. Some are content to take the money and ignore the TV version, while others have written special books to tie in with the new publicity. Britain's Antonia Fraser chose a unique course recently when her series *Jemima Shore Investigates* was aired by Thames Television. Seven of the TV story lines (by such writers as Simon Brett) were converted into seven short stories by Frances Heasman and John Burke. Collected as *Jemima Shore Investigates* (London: Thames Methuen), the paperback volume has an Introduction about her character written by Antonia Fraser, who obviously approves of the creative efforts of these other writers on Jemima's behalf.

COMING ATTRACTIONS: The expanded Spring list from The Mysterious Press now includes short-story collections by Mickey Spillane and Donald E. Westlake, coming in March and April, as well as Gregory Mcdonald's new novel, *Cocky, Flynn,* also due in April.

The Danger, a new Dick Francis novel about the kidnaping of a woman jockey, received high praise on its recent British publication. One critic calls it "the best yarn Dick Francis has written," and "the most unputdownable thriller I have ever read." It's due here in the early Spring.

Random House plans to publish Norman Mailer's new novel, *Tough Guys Don't Dance,* later this year. It's described as a psychological thriller.

Who Killed the Robins Family?, the best-selling contest novel created by Bill Adler and written by Thomas Chastain, will have a sequel this August, also published by Morrow.

© 1984 by R. E. Porter.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BLOODY VISIONS

by CHRIS STEINBRUNNER

Some twenty years ago a modest spy thriller was fashioned from one book of a not very well known espionage series. *Dr. No* did not find its audience quickly: after initial success in England and New York, the film found resistance at first in smaller American cities. But that resistance was conquered, and the James Bond series has been the most successful group of melodrama films in cinema history. And the young Scot who portrayed Secret Agent 007, Ian Fleming's creation, was propelled into testy stardom.

Sean Connery starred as Bond in only six films of the series, and the role has since fallen into other hands—in a string of lushly produced epics now under the control of Albert Broccoli, owner of the late Fleming's literary properties. One of these properties, however, escaped from his grasp, and recently, after years of legal discussion, it has been redone by other hands. Not only has producer Jack Schwartzman extracted *Thunderball* from the Broccoli bunch, he has managed to persuade Sean Connery, who more than ten years ago swore he would never be Bonded again, to return to his best role—the most successful cinema hero of the heroics-starved postwar world—in the pun-titled *Never Say Never Again.*

Connery's sneer-and-swagger portrayal of the licensed-to-kill 007 was electrifying, even though at first it was thought he lacked sufficient polish (he soon learned it) and he initially did not quite suit Fleming, who preferred David Niven. But Broccoli's canny instinct—he was impressed, he said recently, by the actor's masculine walk—made casting history. But for Connery the casting was confining, and in 1971 he left to enlarge his craft. (Among the mysteries he has acted in since: Hitchcock's *Marnie,* *The Anderson Tapes,* and Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express.*) He was vehement about never essaying James Bond again. But a decade passed, and Schwartzman, now the holder of rights to a Fleming book, managed to persuade him by offering Connery production control. "After all these years it might be interesting," the actor recalls musing. "As far as I was concerned, this was the first Bond film ever made and I tried to find a style appropriate to the story."

The style he found was to present us with an older, slightly sagging secret agent proving his mettle even though his superior, M, has exiled him to a health clinic to dry out—herbal teas supplanting martinis—and shape up. Not that Connery was over the hill at playing Bond: after all, his major replacement in the Broccoli series, Roger

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Moore, was two years older than he. But this Bond is more thoughtful, less sardonic, with somewhat more character. The plot, too, has more character, and Connery himself has said he wished to add elements of firm mystery rather than just string together action sequences.

Never Say Never Again has plenty of the latter—some wondrously smashing, and some slightly extreme—but it has a substantial basic plot as well. Indeed, it is the plot of *Thunderball*—for legal reasons the original story had to be retained, making this film the first Bond *remake*. SPECTRE (Special Executor for Counterintelligence, Terrorism, Revenge, and Extortion) hijacks two American cruise missiles with which to hold the world at ransom, a theme which can be nicely updated—nuclear terrorism is topical.

The surrounding cast is good, too. As the evil millionaire, Largo—played with paunchy authority by Adolfo Celi in the original version—we now have a younger, more complex portrayal by Klaus Maria Brandauer, the Austrian star of the Academy Award-winning *Mephisto*. Edward Fox, so good in *Day of the Jackal* and as Miss Marple's nephew in *The Mirror Crack'd*, is M, and Max Von Sydow is SPECTRE's sinister Blofeld.

All the familiar support group are here—from Q (Alec McCowen, the police detective from Hitchcock's *Frenzy*) to Miss Moneypenny—wearing fresh but interesting new faces.

Which is not to say the opposing team is spent. Roger Moore's recent *Octopussy* transcends its mindless title to give us a crackling good train thriller, circus thriller, fantasy-India thriller, and nuclear kidnap thriller. But it's delightful to have Connery back—and unfortunate that he may not play Bond one more time because of the unavailability of another book. However, for Connery, *No* to *Never* is a good stretch.

© 1984 by Chris Steinbrunner.

INTERVIEW: JEAN DARLING (1)

This is the first part of an interview that will be concluded in the next issue.

EQMN: You've had a substantial career in show business, much of it before you became a writer, and many of us remember you well from the original *Our Gang* comedies. Where were you born and how did you happen to become a child star?

DARLING: I was born in Santa Monica, California. From the time I was six months old, my actress mother carried me "on" both the New York stage and in Hollywood movies whenever she could wangle me a job. As far as *Our Gang* is

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

concerned, I was "discovered" by the wife of a Hal Roach Studio executive I climbed in a candy store. When Mama had disentangled me, Mrs. Lloyd French suggested a test should be made of me. It was and I was signed for three pictures with options for another five years.

EQMN: On balance, has that early success helped or hurt you in what you want to accomplish with your life?

DARLING: Today I realize that the unique opportunity of being guided by great directors, as well as being allowed to watch legendary comics—Laurel and Hardy, Charlie Chase, Harry Langdon, Patsy Kelly, etc.—ply their trade on the set next door is my most valuable asset. Also on the credit side is having lived through a most unhappy childhood—or more to the point, I never was a child, just a small commodity. Until age twenty-five, much of my life was consumed by resentment at the *fait accompli* imposed on me at such an early age. You may wonder that I count unhappiness as an asset, but how many masterpieces have been executed by contented, fulfilled artists? Not that I'm capable of doing anything so grandiose—but my need for expression makes me a perpetual trier.

EQMN: You played the wonderful, second female lead, Carrie, in the original cast of *Carousel*. How long did you stay with the show?

DARLING: Eight hundred and fifty consecutive performances on Broadway—still a record for a singer—before an ambulance took me away for another long run at Lenox Hill Hospital with infectious hepatitis. Being in *Carousel* taught me many things that have been of utmost value throughout my professional life. I'll mention just two. The first was in Boston. During rehearsals I resented the overabundance of criticism that came my way. Being well trained not to talk back, I accepted all direction silently, seething inside, until the director, Rouben Mamoulian, took me to one side and told me he could no longer put up with my surly attitude. I burst into tears and told him how miserable I was and why. Drying my tears, he apologized and explained that as most of the cast was reasonably new to show business, he was afraid they'd go to pieces if he leaned on them too hard. As I was an old pro, he was directing them by charging me with their faults. He hadn't realized I misunderstood. From then on, everything was peaches and cream and I had learned the importance of talking out a grievance before it grows into a terminal cancer.

After *Carousel* had been playing for some months, Oscar Hammerstein stopped by my dressing room to tell me my performance had deteriorated to a point where it would be more fitting in *Follow the Girls*. I asked him what I was doing wrong. Sadly, he said I would have to find out for myself. I fumed and decided to punish him by taking out all the delightful little cutie-poo bits my part had become peppered with over the months. Upon which, all the laughs I secretly had mourned the loss of were back more

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

solid than ever. Thus I learned a performer's most important rule of thumb: Twice as much is *not* twice as good.

EQMN: Do you have any other memories in connection with *Carousel* you'd share?

DARLING: I don't think Dorothy would mind my telling this story on her husband, Richard Rodgers. A year or so after *Carousel* had closed, I was at a party where Dick was coaxed to the piano. Someone suggested I sing "When I Marry Mr. Snow," so I walked to the middle of the room and waited. Dick noodled. I waited. Dick noodled some more. At last I heard a loud "Pssst." I turned to see Dick beckoning frantically. When I hurried over to see what was wrong, he asked, "How does 'Mr. Snow' go?"

EQMN: You live in Dublin now. What brought you from Hollywood to New York to Dublin?

DARLING: Work. Movies were on one coast, the theater on the other. Then when I got married and had a little boy, my place was where my husband was if Roy was to have a father. As mine had died when I was a baby, it was most important that this much desired child would never wonder where both his parents were. So when my husband, Kajar the Magician, left the States to tour his magic show, *Magicadabra,* in most countries around the world except in the Far East, Roy and I went along. As he grew older, Roy stage-managed, directed—you name it, he did it. I sang and was general dogsbody.

After playing the Olympia Theatre in Dublin in March 1969, we took out Irish residency. Dublin was a good central base for us and at the time pleasant, inexpensive, and almost free of air pollution, heavy traffic, and crime. This is no longer the case. In 1980, Kajar died in West Germany. Because rented accommodation is astronomical costwise, Roy and I made a covenant with a building society for a 140-year-old disaster area within walking distance of the City Centre. He is rebuilding it little by little. But the real reason we bought the house is our tabby, Kitten-Kat. She needed a house as a status symbol among her furry set. Most generously, she allows us to share the accommodation.

EQMN: Do you care to talk about your recent accident?

DARLING: A hit-and-run driver knocked me off my Honda motorcycle. It was at a stoplight and there wasn't enough room for him to pass on the left—illegal in the U.K. and Ireland. His rear bumper caught my knee guard. The doctor at casualty where I was taken by ambulance was hesitant about giving me an X-ray and, until Roy pointed it out, was unable to spot a widespread break in my collarbone. He was unsure how to treat it and sought advice from the nurses. Later it was ascertained that I had two fractured ribs and a broken nose.

Although there were witnesses to the accident, not one of them noticed the license plate of the car that toppled me. Another annoyance was finding out that my bike was comprehensively insured only

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for theft, fire, and third party. I still don't know if I'll have to have my shoulder wired. In 1970 I went through a windshield. At the time the doctors said I'd never be able to do more than get around the house. Yoga and time and determination to walk got me back on my feet. This accident hit me harder, because it was on my good left side, the first accident having affected my right leg and spine. But I'm already off and running again, despite the doctors over here, who don't think disablement matters if one is over forty.

THE JURY BOX

by ALLEN J. HUBIN

In the Golden Age between the World Wars, detective fiction of the pure puzzle variety flourished in both England and the U.S. England had, I think, more quantity if not more quality, and in 1930 its leading writers banded themselves together as the Detection Club, with its oath of fealty to the principles of fair play. They produced three collaborative novels in the 1930s *(The Floating Admiral, Ask a Policeman, Double Death)* which deserve the renewed attention they are now enjoying.

Of great interest is a pair of short novels produced by club members and recently rediscovered in the 1930–31 pages of an English periodical. *The Scoop & Behind the Screen* (Harper & Row, $13.95) are introduced by the club's current president, Julian Symons, and represent that bygone era in fine fashion. The first tale has chapters by Dorothy L. Sayers, who also provided overall guidance in the writing of both stories, Agatha Christie, E. C. Bentley, Anthony Berkeley, Freeman Wills Crofts, and Clemence Dane. It's a neatly clued case of multiple murder, suspects, and alibis. The second and shorter story is the work of Hugh Walpole, Ronald Knox, Christie, Sayers, Berkeley, and Bentley. Here a humble family gathering is disturbed by a bleeding corpse who cannot, it seems, have got that way by identifiable hands. Delightful it is to have these earliest of the club's collaborations in print again.

Second novels sometimes are harder to write than debuts, and prove less successful. This, happily, should not be the case for Thomas Perry. His first, *The Butcher's Boy,* won an Edgar. I reckon his second, *Metzger's Dog* (Scribners, $14.95), is even better, more inventive, more humorous. Thieves with a cannon installed in their van steal $1 million in cocaine from the University of Los Angeles. Just for fun, they also take a research report that the CIA would—and does—commit mass murder to get back. But the thieves are a clever and elusive bunch, determined to obtain $619,350 for the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

papers no matter what. Colorful characters here (wait till you meet Dr. Henry Metzger and his monstrous dog, not to mention Chinese Gordon and his henchmen) and magnificent set pieces. However will Perry top this?

This must be the year of the first novel. *The Gold Solution* by Herbert Resnicow (St. Martin's, $11.95) is another one and a gem it is: sparkling dialogue, a neat locked-room puzzle, and a consulting engineer turned detective who is well worth a series of appearances. Alexander Gold's heart attack turned him sedentary and cut off the cash flow. Serious. Meanwhile, a world-famous and hopelessly incompetent architect is murdered in his fortified New York City sanctorum. Gold, though fearing his attack has rotted brain cells, takes on the impossible case on a contingency basis. Howdunit, first; then whodunit and whydunit. Read this!

Maneuvers by Fredric Newman (Dial, $15.95) is perhaps more a peacetime *M*A*S*H* than a crime novel, though murder and its investigation do carry the story line. Captain Abe Redden, an Army psychiatrist (as was Newman), is stationed in West Germany in the early 1960s. He's surrounded by lunatics in positions of responsibility; in fact, it seems Redden's lot in life to attract a terminal density of the certifiable—his patients are among the most sane around him. A teenage girl, victim of a botched abortion, dies while he's on duty. A soldier who asks to see him disappears. Objects near him explode. The military policeman assigned to these cases has a fixation on rooting out homosexuals. Humorous, even hilarious in spots; overlong for its plot (376 pages); on balance a very entertaining novel.

Dead in the Water ($11.95) by Ted Wood is the 1983 recipient of the Scribner Crime Novel Award. It's a bit slow to develop interest and impact, showing something of its first-novel status. But in the end it proves very satisfying, with a well met protagonist. The setting is Murphy's Harbour, Ontario, one hot August. Reid Bennett, once of Vietnam and the Toronto police, where he learned—well but to his sorrow—to kill, is the one-man police force. The body of a U.S. private eye turns up in the lake, and two people are missing. These matters and the usual peace-keeping are a bit much for a solo lawman, but Bennett and his canine assistant are a resourceful pair.

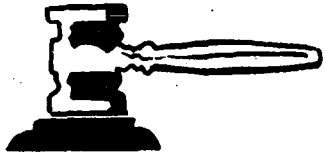
Charlaine Harris' second crime novel, *A Secret Rage* (Houghton Mifflin, $13.95), treats of rape in a sensitive, deeply felt way, and offers fine suspense as well. Nickie Callahan's career as a New York model is already on the down side at twenty-seven. She returns home to a college town in Tennessee, resumes studies, begins to build her life anew. Old friends, new friends, relaxed southern hospitality. Into this comes a rapist: one victim, then another (a friend of Nickie's), then . . . Then the rapist turns killer, and in rage and fear Nickie compiles, shortens, her own list of the possibly guilty.

A Sherlockian association item is *Murder Most Irregular* by H.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Paul Jeffers (St. Martin's, $11.95), in which New York's Baker Street Irregulars fall prey to a vengeful killer during a pilgrimage to a Holmesian shrine (Baskerville Hall) in England. One of their number, David Morgan, a private investigator, is asked to identify the killer, who seems also to be one of the Irregulars. These folks are an interesting lot, modeled on real people, the narrative makes use of a nicely diverting device, and the resolution is quite satisfactory.

© 1984 by Allen J. Hubin.



DETECTIVERSE

DETERMINATION

by ROSE GARTER KUNIS

When each of the clues you have carefully checked—
The matchbook, the timepiece, the knife with blood flecked
That was used on the victim his chest to bisect,
The clean hypodermic employed to inject
A bubble of water or a germ to infect—
And all possible culprits you shrewdly collect,
And you marshal your talents so you can detect—
If you've read enough mysteries you will reflect
On the final solution that's always correct:
The felon's the one that you'd never suspect.

© 1984 by Rose Garter Kunis.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* short story by

GWENDOLINE BUTLER

first publication in the United States

Can stories be sad and even grim, yet very funny? A tour de force from Gwendoline Butler, who has illustrated time after time that they can be . . .

TIME BOMB

by GWENDOLINE BUTLER

Concerning death: it is a fact of human nature that we like deaths to be recorded. The unknown, unidentified dead disturb us. Even murderers, whether they know or not, share in this feeling, and want the names and addresses of their victims to be set down. It is often hard for them to bite back the impulse to set the record straight and they leave little messages: clues, criminologists call them. Some murderers, like Jack O'Hara, actually write their names on little cards. Even in war, the anonymous dead worry people so that afterwards they put up memorials to them.

When the bombs fell, people took refuge in caves of one sort or another. Some were man-made. One set, of natural origin, near South London, was specially favored.

Later on, when the war was over, bodies—skeletons really—were found there. The rumor went around that they were refugees who had got trapped. This was not true, they were skeletons, but they were not products of the war, they were old, immemorially old. All the same, the stories of the skeletons were told all over the neighborhood. Such stories cling onto life, constantly denied, never quite

Copyright Gwendoline Butler 1972.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

believed in, but never scotched either, becoming part of the folklore of the district.

The Baker family often told it. As a girl, Mrs. Margery Baker had sheltered in the caves herself and heard the story told by her dad while he was alive. She sang her children to sleep with it. Surprisingly, she had a sweet voice and a true ear. "Broken bones, tick tack toe, all spread out in a row," she sang. The children hummed with her; the sense of it did not disturb their sleep. IQs were low in the Baker family, but they were all good sleepers. However, some of the meaning must have got through, because they became a necrophilic family and even the littlest had a dry bone to rattle. Two children were exceptional—the eldest, a girl, Pauline, and a boy, Sheldon. Fancy names for fancy people.

When the third daughter and fifth child was born, Mrs. Baker was put about. "Well, I don't know," she said to Pauline. "You'll have to stop at home and help. You can't go to school."

"I can't stay home, Mum," said the practical Pauline. "You'll have the School Attendance Officer round here, won't you? No, I'm going to school. You'll have to manage somehow during the day. I'll see to things when I get home."

And she did. Nothing impeded her progress at school, where she was brilliant. Very soon a scholarship to a grander school came her way. "Oh, you can't take it," said her mother. "We couldn't manage."

At school Pauline said: "I can manage about attending the school. But the uniform's the difficulty. I don't think she'd buy it."

"We allow a grant of money."

"Yes. I know. But *she'll* spend it and there won't be much I can do about it. I can't actually control her. No, you'll have to arrange about the uniform and I'll get myself to the school."

So a woman from the Education Department came round and brought the uniform.

No further children born to Mrs. Baker survived the first few months of life. "A blessing really," said the social worker who called. You weren't supposed to say this sort of thing, but she did. One or two slight bruises on the infant faces showing up after death had worried her slightly, but Mrs. Baker seemed genuinely distressed, the deaths were otherwise natural, and, as she thought, were a blessing really.

The second child, Sheldon, grew up. Science was his special bent; he was even more brilliant than his sister and soon won an even grander scholarship to a great school. The same problem came.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"You'll have to work it the way I did," Pauline advised him. "I'll send for the Education Officer."

The woman from the city's Education Office and the social worker met on the stairs.

"These children's maternal grandfather was Jack O'Hara." It was something she had long wanted to get out. "He did away with twenty-three people before they caught up with him. All from the best of motives, of course. Or so he said."

Jack O'Hara, the most celebrated mass murderer of all time. Other men, in Dusseldorf and Hamburg and Chicago, had put away more, but none had his style. He always laid his victims out neatly and put their name, if he knew it and he nearly always did, on a card on their breast, with his signature appended.

"The rest of the family are dregs, but these two children are worth saving."

"I knew about Jack O'Hara," admitted the woman from the Education Office. "I think about it every time I meet them. I'm glad you spoke."

"It makes you think," said the social worker. "They're a very cohesive family, though. Hang together." She gave an uneasy laugh. The image of *all* the Baker family hanging together, like dead dolls, disturbed her. "Take Dad now. I don't know what function Dad's got in the family, but I swear they're fond of him."

"What sort's Dad?"

"He eats and drinks. Drinks quite a lot, takes what jobs he can get, loses them mostly."

Mrs. Baker had one treasure, which was a heavy brass ornament which had belonged to her mother and grandmother and which she kept well polished. Pauline told her no, it was not a vase, it was a First World War shell case and would once have been full of high explosive.

When Pauline was seventeen she won a scholarship to Oxford. Her brother, unusually talented as a mathematician, won one to an equally famous university. Pauline saw to the arrangements.

"The Education Office say they will pay the money grants direct into our own bank accounts," she announced briskly.

"So we're independent?"

Pauline nodded.

"What about *them?*" He meant the others, the rest of the family.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Ah, that's it, isn't it?" They looked at each other. "They're getting worse, aren't they?" Sheldon nodded. "Mum always polishing her brass. And Dad—have you noticed they've started drinking now? That's new. I used to think as the kids grew up and things got easier they'd learn how to manage. But it's not so. It must be something deeper in them than I'd thought. And the kids! The little one really *can't* walk and she's never going to."

Sheldon cleared his throat. "We can't leave them."

"No." She was decisive. Their eyes met.

They took vacation jobs. They didn't need to consult each other about the jobs they took, she in a chemist's shop, he driving a van.

In early October, two weeks before their University term started, Pauline said: "We're going to move you, Mother. To a much better home. Tell Mrs. Welsh next door. Let her have the furniture. I'm getting you all new."

Mrs. Baker was excited, she liked the idea of a move. Mrs. Welsh agreed with her. "They're good kids, your two eldest," said Mrs. Welsh. "You got good kids, Mrs. Baker."

They moved late one evening. Pauline made them a last hot drink in the old house, the three other children, her mother and dad. "Hot cocoa," she said. "Make you sleep."

It should—some hundreds of tablets of phenobarbitone were crushed in it.

"I like thick cocoa," said Dad. "Reminds me of my days in the Navy. The King's Navy it was then."

"You were only in the Navy two days, Dad," said Pauline tolerantly. "Then they discovered you had fits." She poured him an extra large mug of cocoa. It was all calculated scientifically according to body weight, and he was a large man.

"I'll have a little more if I may, Pauly."

She shook her head. "Enough is enough. I've got it all worked out."

Pauline arranged Mother, Father, brothers, and sisters in the van. Sheldon drove. She sat by him. Everyone in the back of the van was quiet.

"They've found the rum," said Pauline.

"Mum didn't take much of the cocoa."

"Enough, I think. She's got good resistance, has Mum, but she's taking plenty of rum. That'll do the job."

"What was she fiddling round in the back of the van for?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Was she? I didn't see."

They traveled in silence. Sheldon knew where he was going.

"Here we are, Mum," said Pauline eventually, helping her mother out of the back of the van. "Mind the path."

"Oh, are we going to the caves, Pauly?" said her mother, dreamily. "Where's Dad? I'm afraid the little ones have dropped off."

"He's coming. Sheldon's helping him."

"I've always liked the caves. Remember how I used to tell you stories about sheltering there? Are we going to live here?"

"Yes. Right at the back. You're going to be a troglodyte."

"I believe I shall like that."

"I think you will, Mum."

"But won't people come looking? I like to be private."

"You'll be private. No one's going to come here."

Dad didn't speak. He'd had more of the rum. Pauline and Sheldon conducted their parents to a little cul de sac on one side of the caves, and made them comfortable on rugs. They tucked the family in, put out all but one candle, and got into the van.

"It was the only way," said Pauline. "They'll be quite safe there. For always."

"Yes. We had to do what was best for them," agreed Sheldon. He started the van. "And after all, we have our own lives to live. I left an envelope with their names and addresses in Dad's pocket. But, of course, they'll never be found."

In the cave, Mrs. Baker shifted herself on her blankets. "I suppose I'm in bed. Dad, you've gone very quiet. Isn't it funny, Dad, I've never felt happier or freer. Wonderful kids," she said sleepily.

In the dim dark distance there was a faint bang, almost like a bomb. The cave reverberated softly.

"Remember how we used to come here during the war, Dad, because of the bombs? You know *my* bomb, Dad? A shell case from the First World War, Pauline said it was. Blood, sweat, and tears, that's what Churchill said, wasn't it? That was another war, you used to say. I fairly loved that brass. But think of it quietly living there, all alone, all through Granny's day, through my mother's, through my life, two wars. Stop polishing that useless brass, you used to say. You can never tell when things are going to be useful."

She went on in a whisper, "I knew my brass wasn't dead. There was a bit of powder still in it at the bottom. TNT, I said to myself, that's a name I know. I never told you. Not Pauline. Nor Sheldon.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And today I saw that look in their eyes. The look like my dad's. I put a piece of petrol-soaked rag inside the brass and set light to it so it would smolder, and I hid the brass inside the van. The heat will grow and grow and the powder will feel it . . . "

Perhaps Dad was not so far gone as might have been supposed. At any rate, there was a faint mutter. "Wouldn't work, love. Like all your ideas. Know you do your best, but not a chance. Wouldn't do. Silly old girl." It was her epitaph. His, too.

Outside in the night air the van was hurrying away. The two in front smelt burning and Pauly turned round and swore. "Bit of an old rag burning," she said.

"Doing any harm?"

"It's catching light to some paper. Nothing else." She leaned over to beat the fire out. She could have put it out easily, it was nothing of a fire, but in her haste she pushed against the driver. The car swerved, driving like a bomb straight at a lorry loaded with cement.

"Did you hear that bang, Dad? I think that bang was it. That was Pauly and Sheldon going up."

But there was no bang except in her mind. Their death was swift and accompanied only by the sound of tearing metal. They predeceased their mother by some minutes. As she knew.

"After all," she said, as she turned easily into her eternal sleep, "I couldn't let them grow up like Dad, could I?"

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO SUBSCRIBERS

All subscription orders and mail regarding subscriptions, including change of address, should be sent to P.O. Box 1930, Marion, Ohio 43305.

For change of address, please advise 6 to 8 weeks before moving. Send your current mailing label with new address.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* Scrib Merlin story by

RON GOULART

"I don't imagine Mr. Hoogly got around to mentioning me in his will," Salty said, "even though he was quite taken with the drawings I've made and all. So since he really made it clear, with his dying breath just about, that he wanted me to have this little bonus, though his idea of little may not match mine—"

"What exactly did he say?" Scrib interrupted . . .

ADAM AND EVE ON A RAFT

by RON GOULART

He wasn't dead when he landed at her feet.

But nearly so.

He'd come hurtling out of a third-story window of his vast stone mansion and landed with an unsettling cracking, splattering sound on the rose-colored flagstones of the courtyard.

Salty Warbeck, tossing her portfolio clear of the spatters of fresh blood, moved up and knelt beside the dying man.

A flutter of something up at the open window made the slim blonde glance upward. A white lace curtain was waving faintly. Up from the gabled roof a single sooty seagull went rising into the midday air, circling away toward nearby Long Island Sound.

"Mr. Hoogly," said Salty, bending her head low and brushing at his ruined old face with her hair, "how are you, or is that a dumb question? You'll have to excuse me since I'm really not used to finding dying people. Oops, I shouldn't say that, since it may dampen your spirits, but— What happened?"

The plump millionaire gazed up at her through dimming eyes. "Hello there, my little—cutie—" he wheezed. "And—such a gifted artist."

© 1984 by Ron Goulart.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Listen, don't think I don't enjoy flattery as much as the next person," she informed him. "The thing is, though, Mr. Hoogly, that you actually ought to be talking, at a crucial time like this, about yourself, you know, and explaining what happened and all."

"Want you to have—a little bonus," gasped Munson Hoogly, making a dreadful sound that was part chuckle and part death rattle. "Little cutie—done lots of nice ads for me. Hidden money—tell you where."

"No, really, Mr. Hoogly, you've paid me more than adequately, especially since those dippy account executives in the ad agency that handles your account don't think I'm really a commerical artist at all. See, they just can't get used to the fact that I'm a woman *and* a regular contributor to *The National Buffoon*. Even though, as we've chatted about many a time in pleasanter circumstances when I've dropped by here to deliver finished art, my main ambition in life is— But you were saying?"

"Hidden money, Salty," muttered the expiring old man. His eyes flickered from side to side. "Don't want rest of them—to know—but give you a hint. You'll find—smart kid—"

"Please don't go trying a dying message on me, Mr. Hoogly. I mean, if that's really your last wish, well, okay, but I'm not at all good at this sort of thing. I did have, which I may have mentioned during one of our nice chats over ice cream, that I used to have a gentleman friend who had a knack for solving cryptic stuff like that. People were continually dying when he happened to be in the vicinity and gasping out all sorts of puzzling— I guess, though, I ought not to keep interrupting you."

"Pay attention, Salty," gasped Hoogly, his bloodied head raising up slightly off the stained flagstones. "Here's how to find some cash—lots of it—"

"Well, I'd prefer a clear-cut statement, but go ahead."

"Adam and Eve," Hoogly choked out. "Adam and Eve—on a raft."

"Beg pardon?"

"Adam and Eve," he repeated in his rapidly fading voice, "on a raft." His head sank back, his body quivered, his hands fluttered like the wings of a fledgling bird.

His eyes drifted shut. "By the way," he added. "I was pushed."

He shuddered twice and died.

"Oh, darn," said Salty to the dead millionaire, "you should've told me that part right off at first."

Shaking her head sadly, she stood back and away from the corpse.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A new wind came blowing from the Sound and the young woman hunched her narrow shoulders, shivering.

"Adam and Eve on a raft," she said to herself. "I don't really much want to, but I guess I'm going to have to get in touch with Scrib Merlin."

The carved oak door of the Hoogly mansion now burst open. The chubby butler came puffing out, followed by Hoogly's only son and his latest wife.

"I'm afraid you're a little late," Salty told them as they came running toward the body.

Scrib Merlin poked at his ancient typewriter. "I wonder what kind of muse presides over copywriters," he muttered. "Specifically copywriters who bat out one-minute radio commercials for Bowling Green Toilet Cleaner. New Improved Bowling Green Toilet Cleaner with SaniScrub 36 added."

Dusk was descending on Manhattan and the brick wall a few feet outside the dingy window of his minute office was slowly turning an ominous black.

The phone rang.

"Amthrax & Associates," he answered. The switchboard girl went home at six.

"Don't scream or yell or call me foul names," requested a familiar voice. "Okay, Scrib?"

He frowned. "Salty?"

"I intended to call you much earlier but I got tied up with the police and some reporters and all."

"For two years?"

"Oh, you mean, which is a perfectly natural question really, why haven't I called you for over two years and then am suddenly doing it now," said Salty. "Well, we broke up, you knew that."

He nodded. "I was aware of the fact, yes. I also recall your statement that you never wanted to see me again."

"I still don't much like you, Scrib, if you want the honest-to-gosh truth," she admitted. "I mean, I was very fond of you at one time and, I do think, fairly supportive. I tried to listen to your many and varied complaints about Mr. Amthrax, even though he always seemed to me a very nice man although a bit on the short side and—"

"He's a midget. He is no more than four feet high even when standing on tiptoe."

"Size isn't everything. Look at me. I'm slim, yet I'm very attractive

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and eventually I'm going to move out of cartooning, even though I have a great affinity for it, and become a model in—"

"Why did you phone me, Salty? Why were you with the police?"

"These were Long Island police," she said. "In fact, I just now got back from Cold Harbor, Long Island. That's in Suffolk County."

"I know. It's where that halfwit you've been doing newspaper ads for resides. Munson Hoogly, owner of ninety-six Cone-Y Island Ice Cream Shops in the tri-state area. Perpetrator of the worst radio spots ever to defile the human ear, a man who has set back the cause of communication several score—"

"You ought to speak well of the dead."

"Hoogly's dead?"

"He fell out a window," she explained. "Well, he didn't fall. At least, he said he was pushed. Except a fairly unimaginative man named Detective Bonfigli, which is pronounced, as you just heard, Bon-feely but is spelled, for some dippy reason, B-o-n-f-i-g-l—"

"Did you want to get together with me, Salty, or what?"

"Well, yes," she said in a somewhat, for her, timid voice. "The thing is, the time that playboy got killed in my apartment, or actually by falling out of it, and you had solved that dying-message business with the old comedian, well, as I tried to make perfectly clear at the time, Scrib, I respect your ability at solving puzzles like that, but I don't want us to get involved in any other way. But if you could help me out now I'd be most—"

"Wait, now. You're telling me Hoogly passed on some kind of dying message to you?"

"Yes," Salty said. "I didn't mention that to the police, though I did inform them Mr. Hoogly hinted he'd been pushed, except this detective Bonfigli doesn't much accept that at all."

"Hoogly was murdered?"

"Yes, but that's not really what I want you to work on. You don't actually hate me, do you?"

"Not exactly, but—"

"Good, and I, even though as I once explained, think you're much too crass in your outlook on life, still admire your ability to—"

"Ha." He sat up in his chair. "That old coot gave you a lead on something you think'll make you money, right? Sure, and you didn't tell the cops. So that makes you as crass as—"

"A lot of money may be involved. Everybody knows how eccentric Munson Hoogly was."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Yeah, I've heard he squirreled wads of cash all over that ten-acre estate and marina of his out there."

"Now, from a strictly legal point of view the money ought to go to his heirs," said Salty. "Perhaps to his only son, Beauford Hoogly, and his most recent wife, Sabrina Destino Hoogly, who claims to be just thirty though she's got all kinds of squiggly little lines around her eyes and her—"

"She's still attractive. I've seen her picture in *The Times*."

"Anyway, Scrib, I don't imagine Mr. Hoogly got around to mentioning me in his will, even though he was quite taken with the drawings I've been making and all. So since he really made it clear, with his dying breath just about, that he wanted me to have this little bonus, though his idea of little may not match mine—"

"What exactly did he say?"

"Will you help me then?" She sounded pleased. "For a split of—um—how does thirty percent sound?"

"Better than twenty-five percent, not as good as fifty percent."

"Well, I might go to fifty percent, depending on how much there turns out to be. See, I know you'd like a big lump sum to start your own advertising agency and—that's still your goal, isn't it?"

"Yep."

"And you haven't come up with the money on your own since I saw you last?"

"Nope. How much did Hoogly say there was hidden away?"

"He didn't. I imagine it has to be in the thousands, wouldn't you?"

"Could be, yes."

"You'll really help me?"

After a few silent seconds, during which he stared out at the darkening brick wall, Scrib answered, "Okay. So what was the dying message he—"

"One thing further, which I hope won't discourage you," Salty said carefully. "Even though in the past we were intimate and had a somewhat pleasant relationship, I don't want to start up anything like that again. What I'm suggesting is a strictly business relationship. Anyway, for all I know you're passionately in love with some new creature who—"

"No, there's nobody special," he answered. "But we'll keep this a business thing, Salty. What was the dying message?"

"I'll tell you day after tomorrow, while we're driving out to Cold Harbor to look around."

"Day after tomorrow? Aren't you anx—"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The funeral's the day after tomorrow. It seems rather sudden to me, but that's what the widow wants," she replied. "Since Barnum—did I mention that the butler's name is Barnum and he's fairly fat and I'm not at all sure what sort of strange sex life he may lead but he's very fond of me and he's going to let me in the place to poke around while everyone else is away at the funeral and all. Can you get off work, commencing around noon?"

"I've been putting in a lot of extra time, so I can take the whole day off."

"Are you still living in that depressing apartment house in the East Eighties?"

"Yep."

"I'll pick you up exactly at noon," Salty said. "Oh, and, Scrib?"

"What?"

"It's been nice talking to you again." She hung up.

"C'mon, c'mon, nice baby," urged Salty. "You can do it."

Seated uneasily in the passenger seat next to her, Scrib inquired, "Why do you keep talking to the car?"

"It seems to help," she answered as she guided the ancient green Volkswagen into another lane of the expressway. "Some machinery is very sensitive and you have to sweet-talk it quite a bit. I have a toaster that's the same darn way and if you don't flatter it the toast pops out like charcoal. Plants are that—"

"Suppose you fill me in on Hoogly's alleged dying message."

The afternoon was a grey, rainy one. The VW's windshield wipers did their work in a jerky, complaining way.

"Okay," she said, her eyes on the rainswept road and her shoulders hunched. "Well, the actual message itself was pretty dippy. Mr. Hoogly led up to it by saying he wanted me to sort of have a bonus because of all the splendid drawings I've been providing for his Coney Island Ice Cream Shop newspaper ads. Then he seemed to get the notion we were being eavesdropped on and he turned sly."

"Saying what?"

"Adam and Eve on a raft."

"Hum?"

" 'Adam and Eve, Adam and Eve,' he gasped out. 'On a raft.' Not certain I'd heard him correctly, I asked him, even though he was breathing his last, to repeat it. He said, 'Adam and Eve on a raft,' all over again. People do say some odd things while they're—"

"Didn't Hoogly start life as the owner of a greasy-spoon café?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"He did, yes. That's where he invented his Special Creamy Hoogly Ice Cream and began his climb to success. It's a real American success story how he parlayed that stuff into a chain of—"

"The point is, Salty, that 'Adam and Eve on a raft' is old short-order slang," Scrib cut in. "You know, waitresses used to holler back to the frycook things like, 'Hounds on an island,' or 'Shimmy in the hay.' Meaning hot dogs on baked beans and strawberry jello."

"So what does 'Adam and Eve on a raft' mean?"

"Two poached eggs on toast."

She sighed and the car swerved slightly to the left. "I don't see where that gets us," she said, disappointed. "What kind of dying message is that?"

"It suggests several things to me. All of which we can check out when we get to the estate."

Salty brightened some. "I knew I'd picked the right man for the job." She reached over and patted his hand approvingly.

The funeral procession was quite impressive. Three glittering Mercedes, a sparkling Rolls, and then a string of expensive domestic automobiles came rolling somberly through the open ironwork gates of the sprawling Hoogly estate. The black hearse itself was impressively long and highly polished.

"Poor Mr. Hoogly," observed Salty.

Her Volkswagen, quivering and rattling, was idling across the rainy street, waiting for the cortege to depart.

From his side of the car Scrib could see the turreted mansion and the private docking area beyond it. "Is that Hoogly's boat down there?"

"Yes, it's a fifty-eight-foot yawl, or at least I think that's what he told me once." She was watching the funeral parade disappear around a bend in the road. "Mr. Hoogly, rest his soul, showed me around it one afternoon and it's really quite handsome even though he named it the *S.S. Tutti-Frutti*. After, you know, his favorite ice-cream flavor."

"It figures," said Scrib.

Salty drove the car onto the estate grounds and parked it on a patch of white gravel near the row of garages. As she was getting out of the safety belts, she cautioned, "Be nice to Barnum."

The massive front door of the mansion creaked cautiously open while they were still on the bottom step of the stone porch.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A plump pinkish face was floating in the shadows of the foyer, looking out. "Bless my soul, if it isn't Miss Warbeck, right on time."

She hurried up the steps and hugged him. "This must be a trying time for you, Barnum."

"That it is, Miss," he admitted, snuffling. "Dear Mr. Hoogly and I were— Ah, but you'd best scoot inside before you're noticed."

"Noticed? I thought everyone was away at—"

"Not here, oh, no." He pointed a fat thumb at the beamed ceiling. "Prostrated by grief, she claims. Prostrated by booze is closer to the mark."

"The widow?" inquired Scrib.

Frowning over at him, Barnum replied, "You can call her that. Too unsteady on her pins to attend the funeral. Shameful."

Salty asked, "Is she likely to notice us if we poke around?"

"You'll likely have to steer clear of the third floor, Miss. Otherwise I don't imagine you'll have anything to worry about."

"Barnum," she said, tapping at Scrib's arm, "this is Mr. Merlin. He's a—um—very dear friend of mine."

Barnum looked him up and down. "And a fine strapping lad he is, too. Pleased to meet you, sir." He bowed slightly. "Where would you two dears like to begin?"

Salty glanced at Scrib. "Well?"

"The kitchen," answered Scrib.

"Experimental farm?" he asked as he finished putting the last toaster together again.

"You're very handy with appliances, Scrib. I didn't realize—"

"This halfwit farm—where is it, Salty?"

"Right on the estate here. It's small, only an acre or so."

Scrib set the toaster back on its breadboard resting place. "And there are chickens there? And eggs?"

Her head bobbed up and down. "Dozens of both. There's a model chicken coop there where he was experimenting with chickens. He was trying to get better eggs so his ice cream would taste even—"

"Okay, his last words to you were about eggs and toast," said Scrib, starting to pace the big white kitchen where they'd spent the past forty-five minutes. "We've checked out the eggs in the refrigerator, the bin they're kept in, and the powdered eggs in that pantry yonder. Also all the toasters, of which there are five, as well as the breadbox, packages of melba toast, and even the flour bin. We haven't found a damn thing."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"There was that twenty dollars in the sugar bowl."

"You can't call that much of a legacy. Probably belongs to the cook, anyway."

"That's why I didn't take it."

He drummed his fingers on the edge of the sink. "We'll have to search the chicken coop, dig into all the nests."

"His dying message to me was in café jargon," she said thoughtfully. "Could my legacy, maybe, be in the old restaurant?"

He stared at the pretty young woman in a questioning way. "What old restaurant?"

"Mr. Hoogly, didn't I mention this before, Scrib, was a very sentimental old gentleman and he built, oh, it must be about six years ago, a replica of that first restaurant of his."

"And where is that?"

She pointed at the rain-speckled window over the sink. "Out on the other side of the farm."

He let out his breath slowly. "Okay, we'll search the farm. If we don't find anything there, it'll be this sentimental café."

"Don't be downhearted."

"What gave you the notion I was?"

Scrib sneezed again, brushed white feathers off his elbows and then his knees.

"That's very interesting," remarked Salty as she opened the door of the little reconstructed restaurant. "I wasn't aware people could be allergic to chickens in that form. I mean, I have an aunt who breaks out in hives if she eats chicken soup, but you're sneezing over living chickens."

Stepping in out of the grey rain, Scrib looked around the place. It had a counter, stools, and three small booths. The menu was scrawled on a blackboard up over the grill and the prices were from another era. "Anybody'd sneeze with feathers in their nose," he said. "That's not an allergy."

Salty perched on a stool and rotated around one full turn, then did it twice again. "Sixteen chicken nests and not so much as a plug nickel, whatever that might be." She looked thoughtful. "It's funny how one uses everyday expressions and yet isn't at all—"

"Hush," he suddenly advised.

"Don't go taking your frustration out on—"

"No, I'm telling you to fall silent for practical reasons." He made a be-still motion and went easing over to the still-open door.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"What's wrong?" Salty whispered.

He stood listening, hearing nothing but the rain falling down through the branches of the surrounding oaks and maples. "Nothing, I guess," he said finally, closing the door quietly. "I thought I heard someone out there."

"Everybody's still at the funeral except Mrs. Hoogly and she's up in the mansion dead drunk," reminded Salty. "No one'll be back for a good while since the cemetery's way over on the other side of the island almost."

Scrib went around behind the counter. The old-fashioned refrigerator was still in working order, although there was nothing inside it but a box of saltine crackers. There was a small white shelf with six shallow depressions in it and the word EGGS lettered on it.

Scrib crouched a bit, trying to determine if you could somehow hide a wad of money under it.

"Scrib?"

"Hum?"

"You did hear something."

He turned away from the open refrigerator and saw a lean man of about fifty standing near Salty. He wore a dark suit and a somber tie.

"Go right ahead," he urged, smiling some. "I'm as interested in this as you are."

"This is Beauford Hoogly," said Salty in a voice not filled with enthusiasm.

"That same Beauford Hoogly who's supposed to be away at the burying ground?" Scrib shut the refrigerator door.

"I thought I spotted Miss Warbeck coming in when we were driving off," said Hoogly.

"He was in the second Mercedes." Salty folded her hands in her narrow lap and gave a forlorn half turn on the stool.

"It occurred to me that, by golly, the old boy'd been playing tricks again," explained the ice-cream heir. "She was with him at the end and that would've been just like him. Did he tell you where he'd hidden one of his packets of cash?"

Salty kept her lips pressed shut for nearly a half minute. "Well, yes, but not exactly. I mean, your father told me he wanted me to have a little bonus and he gave me a sort of clue that might lead to money, but we've been at it for a couple of hours without any luck to speak of."

"I know," said Hoogly, brushing chicken feathers from his sleeve.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I've been tagging along in your wake for the past hour. At first I was dead certain you knew exactly where to look. Now I'm losing my certainty."

"We'll find it," said Scrib.

"When do you think?"

"Eventually."

"What's the use of finding it now?" said Salty. "It's Hoogly money and if we unearth it, we'll just have to turn it over to him."

"No, no, Miss Warbeck," said Hoogly. "You don't understand quite what I have in mind. I'm no good at these scavenger-hunt things at all, even though my late father doted on paper chases, treasure hunts, and the like."

Scrib leaned over the counter, like a frycook who's anxious for an order. "You have a deal in mind?"

"Fifty-fifty?" suggested Hoogly. "You see, I have a dreadful suspicion dad's left a big chunk of everything to Sabrina. I think I can fight that in court, but I'll need some ready cash meantime."

"You're willing to split half and half?"

The heir smiled from one to the other. "I'll even put you two up at the mansion. Take your time, and if you don't find any loot today try again tomorrow. What say?"

Salty tossed Scrib a quick affirmative nod.

"It's a deal," he told Beauford.

At eleven that night the rain was falling hard and heavy. Scrib was sitting up in bed, alone, reading a book he'd borrowed from the Hoogly mansion library.

After trying the opening paragraph for the third time, he set it aside. "Guess I'm not in the mood for Albert Payson Terhune," he decided and swung out of bed.

Up here on the third floor of the house you could hear the night rain loud and clear.

"What a nitwit day this has been," he said to himself as he paced on the thick Persian carpet. "Looking under chickens, taking a 1930's greasy spoon apart, and finding not one thin dime."

On top of which Salty was sleeping by herself in the next room. With the door between—he'd tried it carefully an hour ago—locked tight.

"No romance, no money. The story of my life."

Barefooted, he continued pacing.

"That old tutti-frutti tycoon must've meant something."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But what?

"Adam and Eve on a raft," muttered Scrib. "Eggs—on a raft. Eggs on a boat? On a boat! Holy moley!"

He started hurrying into his clothes.

No use waking Salty. Let her sleep—safely behind her locked door.

The collar of his sportcoat turned up, a borrowed flashlight clutched close to his chest, Scrib slipped free of the house by way of a back door.

The rain attacked him, splashing and pelting.

He ran, splattering water and mud, down toward the private dock.

He sprinted up the gangway, head ducked low.

Clicking on his flash, he found his way to the galley. He located the light switch and flicked it on. Thin yellow light blossomed and showed him a huge refrigerator hulking in one corner of the small pale-blue room.

There was a whole compartment labeled EGGS.

There were no eggs in it.

He poked his hand inside, squinting. "Sure, this damn thing's got a false bottom."

Scrib whipped out one of the two borrowed screwdrivers he'd also brought along.

In under five minutes he got the false floor of the egg compartment off.

"Hot damn!" There was a business-sized manila envelope on top of stacked packets of cash. The top bills were all hundreds. Judging by the thickness of the packets, there was at least $250,000 here.

"Half of that to Hoogly leaves us $125,000 to split."

But hold on a minute. Hoogly didn't have to know. Scrib could get the dough out of here, hide it, and claim they'd never found it at all.

In fact, even Salty didn't have to know.

With a quarter million of his own, hell, he could start up his own agency just about. At least he could clear out of Amthrax & Associates.

Leaving the money lie, he picked up the envelope. There might be more cash in it, or negotiable bonds.

He tucked his flashlight under his arm, let the refrigerator door swing shut, and leaned against it to examine the contents of the envelope.

Scribbled across the front of it was: *Some interesting facts about my wife's past life.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

So it wasn't money then. Scrib started to open the envelope.

"Don't bother," suggested a feminine voice.

He looked up to see a handsome red-haired woman in the galley doorway. She had a new-looking .32 revolver in her hand and pointed at him.

"Mrs. Hoogly, isn't it? Allow me to express my deepest sympathies to you in this moment of grief and then explain that this isn't what—"

"The envelope, schlep," she requested, "hand it over."

"This? Sure. But I think you—"

"Beauford's so bloody obvious, isn't he? Hiring a private dick to hunt this down and trying to pretend you're just a lover of that scrawny Salty Warbeck."

"She's slender, but not exactly—"

"The envelope, jerko."

He held it out to her. "Sure, here."

Sabrina Hoogly snatched it. "I do wish I could allow you to live," she said, sounding not at all sad, "but you know about this damn thing and you probably suspect what's inside it."

"I never even peeked inside," he assured her. "And your secret, whatever it is, is perfectly safe with—"

"No, you'll simply have to have an accident. Just like poor Munson."

"You pushed him?"

"He fell, but you're going to expire in the boat explosion," she told him. "I'm very good at arranging accidents, as this damned dossier Munson compiled makes very clear."

"Don't blow up this yawl, because there's—"

"Please don't plead and grovel, Mr. Merlin. Die like a man."

"That's not what I'm groveling about, Mrs. Hoogly. I'm trying to tell you that there's—"

"Relax," she advised. Stepping forward, she slammed the pistol butt hard against his temple.

It took six, maybe seven smacks to make him fall down and pass out.

He could see the refrigerator from his position on the galley floor. Scrib awakened to find himself bound and gagged.

He also smelled smoke.

Indicating the *S.S. Tutti-Frutti* was on fire.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He'd had some bad luck on his previous investigations, but nothing like this.

Biting at the gag, he struggled from side to side in an effort to loosen the ropes.

"Aren't you ashamed of yourself for sneaking out on me to go treasure-hunting?" Salty came hurrying into the galley. "I saw you go pussyfooting off from your room. At first I couldn't believe you were doing this, but I decided to get dressed and follow you and a darn good thing I did, considering all the mess you've gone and gotten—"

"Mum mum," Scrib said anxiously, striving to nod at the refrigerator.

"Well, plenty of time to apologize, Scrib, after I get you clear of here. This whole dippy boat is ablaze and it's likely to blow up any minute. Not that—"

"Get this gag off me, you dimwit!" he tried to tell her.

"Yes, yes. Don't moan and groan. I'm going to save you." She took a deep breath, bent down, and picked him clean up off the floor. "I've been, did I get around to mentioning, practicing weight-lifting for quite some time now. I expected it to build up my bosom, which it hasn't, but I'm one heck of a lot stronger than I look."

"Take the damn gag off! Quit babbling!" All that came out was a muffled gargle.

Grunting once, Salty carried him free of the galley and then along the rainwashed deck. She carried him down the gangway and deposited him on the dock a safe distance from the brightly burning yawl.

Flames were crackling high up into the darkness, along with black billows of thick smoke.

"If we'd gone in there together, you wouldn't be in such sorry shape now, Scrib. Imagine Mrs. Hoogly, who I imagined was flat on her back in her room from grief and gin, bopping you on the coco and trussing you up like a—"

"The money! The money! It's on the boat!"

"Don't make so much noise, I'm going to untie you!"

"The gag first, dimbulb!"

"Boy, I wonder if she was a Sea Scout or what. Can you be a girl and join that? Or maybe, being on the social level she is, you learn to tie knots because you know you're eventually going to own a yacht or a yawl or something impressive." She was kneeling next

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to him on the wet planking of the dock. Her lean fingers struggled with the knots in the ropes.

"The gag!"

Salty frowned at him. "Is that gag bothering you? Yes, maybe I better get that off you first." She eased his head up and began working on the knots in the toweling gag. "This knot's quite a puzzler, too. I think it's maybe a granny or possibly a half hitch if that's a knot at all and not something you serve in the Navy. As I said, I'm not much on sea lore or— Ah, there we go. You can speak now."

"Salty, get back on the boat! To the galley!" Scrib shouted. "The money's in the refrigerator there and Mrs. Hoogly didn't take it!"

"The money?" She started to get up, staring across at the burning yawl. "That's terrible, because I don't think I can get—"

There was a great whomping explosion that knocked her flat down across Scrib.

Several more came booming across the rainy night.

A jagged hunk of railing came smashing down onto the dock near them, followed by a half dozen brass bolts.

"Damn," said Scrib, "there went $250,000."

"It was that much, huh?" She rose carefully up off him. "Well, let's look on the bright side. You're still alive."

"If you'd taken the gag off while I was still aboard, then we'd—"

"I was more interested in getting you out of there."

"That's the trouble with you," he said, angry.

"Yes, I guess it is," she admitted and went back to untying him.

DETECTIVERSE

A DANGEROUS THING

by JOHN LARGE

The rookie cop from Harvard
Assumed his role with zeal;
When facing his first robber,
He drew and yelled, "Congeal!"

© 1984 by John Large.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* Photographer story by

JAMES HOLDING

"What!" The Photographer was surprised. "Two million?"

"Two million," Rodolfo said.

"I am stunned. The Big Ones are not usually so generous. Why so in this case?"

"It is not your business to inquire. Is two million satisfactory?"

Manuel smiled and this time his smile was genuine. "For two million cruzeiros, I would nullify even Paulinho Carvalho, the lead samba dancer at Canecaõ. And I must confess to you that it is she whom I covet in my midnight fantasies . . . "

THE PHOTOGRAPHER AND THE SAILOR

by JAMES HOLDING

On this occasion, Rodolfo and The Photographer met at the foot of the enormous statue of Christ the Redeemer on Corcovado Mountain.

The outdoor café there was crowded with tourists and buzzing with chatter in a dozen languages. The day was perfect; a cloudless sky, brilliant sunlight, no hint of haze to veil the magnificent view of Rio de Janeiro spread out below. Eastward loomed the soaring granite hump of Sugar Loaf, and beyond it stretched the expanse of beautiful Guanabara Bay. Across the island-dotted bay, nine miles distant, the city of Niteroi was clearly visible, as was the range of blue-grey mountains behind the city.

Many of the tourists at the crowded café tables carried cameras—the clicking of shutters was constant as the visitors tried to capture on film this lovely panorama of the Cidade Maravilhosa to show the

© 1984 by James Holding.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

folks at home. Almost every tourist wore sunglasses to shield his eyes against the sunlight's dazzle.

In this respect, Rodolfo and Manuel Andradas, The Photographer, were no different from the tourists. Both men wore sunglasses—not to shield their eyes, but to lower the odds that they might be recognized. And The Photographer, who was, as his soubriquet implied, a professional cameraman, had placed his camera case on the table before him and appeared just another tourist.

Rodolfo ordered beer. Manuel settled for a glass of cashew juice, despite the contemptuous snicker his choice elicited from Rodolfo. To Manuel, cashew juice was not only pleasant refreshment but safer than alcohol when one needed a clear head. And he definitely needed a clear head in any discussion of business with Rodolfo, which always dealt with matters of life and death.

The table at which they sat was partially concealed by the trailing boughs of a flowering bush. They were, indeed, quite private, although in a noisy public place. A waiter brought their beer and cashew juice and departed.

The Photographer spoke first, matter-of-fact and bland, although one who knew him well, like Rodolfo, could detect the eagerness behind the question. "You have an assignment for me, Rodolfo?"

"I do." Taking a sip of his beer, Rodolfo looked about him to make sure he couldn't be overheard. "Why else do you think I asked you to meet me here in this Tower of Babel?"

"Tell me about it, *por favor.*"

"I never 'tell' you about an assignment, save for the basic facts you need," said Rodolfo lazily. "Name and address and no more. You should have learned that by now."

"Oh, I have. I have. And I like it that way. May I point out to you, however, that you also name the fee I shall receive for my services before I agree to provide them?"

Rodolfo laughed unpleasantly. "And *I* should have learned *that* by now." He wagged his head in mock remonstrance. "You epitomize one of the Seven Deadly Sins, Photographer. Greed."

"Did you ever hear of a great artist who was not interested in the price his work brought?" Over the edge of his cashew-juice tumbler, Manuel's muddy-brown eyes regarded Rodolfo icily.

"Well, you *are* an artist, I suppose, in your chosen field," conceded Rodolfo sourly. "So now that is settled, can we get back to business?"

The Photographer, despite curiosity about his new assignment,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

felt constrained to state, "I am an artist in *two* chosen fields, Rodolfo. Photography first. Nullification second."

Rodolfo waved a hand. "Or both of the above. If they offer you adequate profit."

"True." Manuel's grin did nothing to thaw the ice in his eyes. "And what is my profit to be from this new assignment?"

Rodolfo said, "Two million cruzeiros."

"What!" The Photographer was surprised. "Two million?"

"Two million."

"I am stunned. The Big Ones are not usually so generous. Why so in this case?"

"It is not your business to inquire. Is two million satisfactory?"

Manuel smiled and this time his smile was genuine. "For two million cruzeiros, I would nullify even Paulinho Carvalho, the lead samba dancer at Canecaõ. And I must confess to you that it is she whom I covet in my midnight fantasies."

"Very well, then." Rodolfo was terse and businesslike now. He wrote a name and address on the margin of the café menu and passed it across the table to The Photographer.

Manuel accepted the menu casually and, just as casually, glanced at the name and address of the man whose murder was worth two million cruzeiros to the Big Ones. After a moment's pause, he tore the flimsy menu carefully into tiny bits and deposited the bits into his pocket. Then he looked across the table at Rodolfo and shook his head. "No," he said quietly.

Rodolfo's eyes rounded in disbelief. "You reject the assignment?"

"I do."

"Why? You want a bigger fee, as usual?"

"No. I would be a fool to nullify the nephew of General Pedro da Silva."

"You just boasted of your artistry." Rodolfo's thick lips curled in a sneer. "Are you telling me you're afraid to accept the assignment?"

"Who would not be? I remind you that General da Silva is a member of the junta which governs this country. A general of the Army. Director of National Security. He wields enormous power. Nobody could nullify his nephew and escape his vengeance."

"Not even you? The artist who has never botched a job? Who has so often and so cunningly made murder appear as accident or suicide?"

"Not even me. I refuse with regret, but I refuse nevertheless. The risk is too great."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Very well." Rodolfo pushed back his chair and rose to his feet. "I am disappointed in you. I suppose we shall have to find somebody else to handle this assignment. Someone who is not so, ah, cautious, shall we say? where two million cruzeiros are involved."

There was malice in Rodolfo's words. For Rodolfo knew quite well that The Photographer valued two things above all else in life. Photography and money. Not necessarily in that order.

For a week thereafter, The Photographer, a member of the staff of *Rio Illustrated,* was busily engaged on routine photographic assignments for his magazine. He did a picture story on Búzios, a quiet seaside resort frequented by the wealthy, who deplored the frenetic popular beaches—Copacabana, Leblon, Ipanema, Leme. He covered the open-air Monday-night performance put on by Bei ja-Flor Carnival Samba Club on the side of Urca Mountain. He was granted the rare privilege of photographing for his magazine a dance session at the genteel, members-only Hippopotamus Disco.

It was not until Saturday evening that the newspapers and broadcasters startled Brazil with the announcement that Enrico da Silva, nephew of General Pedro da Silva, had met an untimely death that afternoon by falling from the balcony of his eleventh-floor apartment to the mosaic sidewalk far below.

A tragic accident, all agreed. Or—and only one obscure radio voice dared to suggest this—perhaps a suicide? But what reason, that bold newscaster hastened to add, could there possibly be for a twenty-eight-year-old multimillionaire bachelor, the favored nephew of General Pedro da Silva, to take his own life?

Manuel Andradas smiled the smug smile of the insider when he heard the news. Enrico da Silva's death was no accident, he knew that quite well. Nor was it a suicide, he knew that equally well. No, a substitute assassin procured by Rodolfo had gone to Enrico's apartment, gained admittance on some pretext, promptly rendered his intended victim senseless, and then thrown him over his balcony rail and walked away.

The Photographer admitted it was a simple, neat, and successful method of making Enrico's death appear accidental or suicidal. Manuel had himself employed the method upon occasion. Yet, strangely, he did not regret his rejection of Rodolfo's assignment. He still had an uneasy feeling about the long arm of General Pedro da Silva.

The following day, Sunday, he received another summons from Rodolfo . . .

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

At half after noon precisely, he joined him in the back booth of a small café on Avenida Atlântica. Across the road, the Copacabana sunworshippers were swarming on the hot sands like a community of bees about to accompany their queen to a new location. Colorful *papagayu* kites floated lazily above the cobalt sea. In the café, the cries of the beach vendors could be faintly heard.

Rodolfo said without preliminary, "You were right, Photographer."

Manuel raised his eyebrows.

"Right?"

"About General da Silva. He does not accept his nephew's death as accident. *Or* suicide. The hunt is on."

"The hunt? I have not heard of any hunt."

"Nor has anyone else," said Rodolfo savagely, "except the chief of Rio's *poliça.*"

"And you, obviously," said Manuel. "How did you come by this knowledge?"

"The Big Ones have a friend on the police council."

"I see. And is there some reason for this odd secrecy of a police hunt?"

"It is the General's hope that the murderer of his nephew will be lulled into a false sense of security by it—and thus be easier to find."

"Murderer, you say. Is that, then, what the General believes? That his nephew was murdered?"

"It is. And he is deploying all the forces at his command to discover the killer's identity."

"Wait." Manuel scratched his head. "I do not understand. What makes the General so certain that his nephew was murdered? The nullification was a smooth professional job, in my opinion." He refrained from saying "I told you so," although he was tempted to do so.

Rodolfo said bitterly, "A stroke of evil fortune! A thousand-to-one chance! How could we have possibly known about Enrico da Silva's weakness?"

Manuel said impatiently, "What are you talking about? What weakness?"

"Enrico da Silva, according to his beloved uncle, has suffered since infancy from a pathological fear of heights, an advanced acrophobia. He would no more have gone out on his balcony in daylight, the General insists, from whence he could see the ground so far below, than he would have cut his own throat. He lived on the eleventh

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

floor of an apartment house, true. But all his windows were heavily draped to prevent him looking out, even by accident. The General has therefore concluded that somebody forced Enrico off his balcony, or that he was bodily thrown over the rail while unconscious. In other words, murdered."

Manuel nodded thoughtfully. "As you say, an evil chance. But not necessarily dangerous to your assassin."

"About the assassin I care nothing," said Rodolfo, "but if the General's investigations should lead to *us,* to the Big Ones, and ultimately reveal us as the instigators of his nephew's death!"

"Impossible," Manuel consoled him sincerely, "so long as your assassin keeps his mouth shut and nobody saw him commit the act."

Rodolfo groaned. "There lies the danger, of course. And that is why I have sent for you, Photographer."

"Because I can keep my mouth shut?"

"To offer you another assignment."

"Let me guess what it is. To assassinate your assassin?"

"Exactly. Because we gravely fear that he will *not* be discreet about his sudden acquisition of two million cruzeiros."

Manuel said, "Before I agree, *perdao,* I must have the answers to some questions."

"Ask," said Rodolfo.

"*Va bem.* Why was Enrico da Silva's death worth such a princely sum?"

"A real-estate matter involving one of our own people," said Rodolfo. "Enrico da Silva owns a block of apartment houses in Botafogo which one of our Big Ones wants to buy as an investment. Enrico repeatedly refused to sell." Rodolfo shrugged. "So our man thought he might have better luck negotiating the sale with Enrico's executors, you see?"

"Second question," said Manuel. "What kind of person is the nullifier you retained in my place?"

"A bully-boy from the docks of Santos. The Big Ones in São Paulo have used him on several occasions to discipline intransigent longshoremen. He was recommended by our man in Santos as effective and close-mouthed."

"Has he ever actually nullified anyone before?"

"No. But our Santos man assured me he would have no scruples."

Manuel gave Rodolfo a pitying look. "Had he ever before in his life, this assassin of yours, been the possessor of two million cruzeiros to do with as he chose, all at one time?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I suppose not."

"And he is still in Rio?"

Rodolfo nodded miserably.

"Despite the advice I presume you gave him to leave as soon as the job was done?"

Again a nod.

"And you have some reason to believe he will catch the eye of General da Silva's *poliça* as long as he remains here?"

"Yes."

"What reason?"

"I had him followed last evening after I paid him off," said Rodolfo. "To make sure he left the city as agreed."

"And?"

"He took a room at the Hotel Trocadero instead. Then he went out to a bar, picked up a girl, and took her to dinner at the Moenda Restaurant. They ordered the entire menu, including expensive French wines," Rodolfo said dryly.

Manuel sighed. "Spending his new-gained cruzeiros like a drunken sailor."

"Oddly enough, that's what he's called," said Rodolfo. "The Sailor."

"The Sailor. Very well. Let us be clear about this, then. You want me to nullify him before he can commit some indiscretion of act or tongue which will bring him to the attention of the police?"

"That is correct. Pray God he has not already revealed anything incriminating to that girl!"

"That's a chance you'll have to take. But the danger you fear most is that if the General's police *do* catch up with The Sailor, he will crack like a dried nutshell at the first squeeze of the pincers and spill all his kernels of information about you and The Big Ones immediately. Is that correct?"

Rodolfo nodded, but said nothing.

"Then I will nullify him," said Manuel.

Upon hearing these words, Rodolfo regained some of his usual arrogance. "You accept without knowing your fee? A miracle!"

"No miracle. A precaution. This Sailor may have heard something of *me* in your negotiations. He must have realized, called as he was from Santos to Rio on an emergency assignment, that he was a substitute for your own man. For *me*. And I would not bet my life on *your* discretion, Rodolfo."

Rodolfo said stiffly, "Your name was not mentioned."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"I'm trying to believe that." Manuel paused. "*Now* will you tell me how much you are offering for this assignment?"

Rodolfo shrugged his shoulders. "Two million," he said. "The same sum you recently rejected."

"That seems scarcely enough in view of the circumstances."

"You may keep, as well, whatever the Sailor has not spent of his fee."

"Thank you. That is very generous." Manuel was sarcastic.

"The Sailor may have hidden it beyond your finding, of course. But if you find it, you can keep it. A bonus."

"I accept. Do you still have a man on the Sailor?"

"Yes. He reported a half hour ago that the girl left the Sailor's room at nine this morning, but that the Sailor himself has not as yet appeared."

"Excellent. Presumably he will emerge for luncheon. What is his room number at The Trocadero?"

Rodolfo told him.

The Photographer said, "If I am successful, I'll meet you at the Flower Market tomorrow at two." He paused. "You have my advance with you?"

"Of course." Rodolfo passed a thick bundle of banknotes under the table.

The Photographer grinned. "This time, you were sure of me, weren't you?"

Rodolfo summoned a smile of his own. "*Tudo bem,*" he said, which could have meant almost anything.

On Rua da Ouvidor next day, Rodolfo was owlishly inspecting a hanging basket of orchids in the Flower Market when The Photographer touched him on the shoulder and, without a word, led the way to a small coffee shop in Avenida Rio Branca around the corner.

The Photographer settled at a tiny table behind a potted palm. Rodolfo joined him. Both ordered *cafezinho* and waited until the girl who served them had departed. Then Rodolfo said, "Well?"

"Your menace has been removed," said Manuel sententiously.

Rodolfo heaved a long sigh of relief. "Tell me."

Manuel took from his camera case an 8 x 10" photographic print in black-and-white and handed it to Rodolfo. "A picture is worth a thousand words," he said.

Rodolfo studied the photo. It showed a typical hotel room—bed, gaily upholstered easy chair, chest of drawers, and a spindly writing

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

desk in a niche beside the window. An open door revealed a glimpse of bathroom fixtures.

In one respect, however, the room was not typical. Supine upon the bed lay the body of a man. A big man, fully dressed. One leg trailed over the side of the bed. The head was turned toward the camera. From the totally lax limbs, the uprolled eyeballs, and the agonized rictus of the mouth, one realized instantly that the man was dead.

"Is that your Sailor?" asked Manuel.

Rodolfo nodded. "Photographer, I salute you. This is indubitably The Sailor." Still examining the photo closely, he asked, "And how did you—ah—cause him to assume this harmless condition?"

"Curare. That's all you need to know." Manuel smiled. "I have my own trade secrets, too. But the autopsy will diagnose heart arrest as the cause of death."

"Splendid!" Rodolfo felt unusually expansive. "Once again you have served us well. Here is the remainder of your fee."

The Photographer tucked the money into his camera case.

"Did you find any of The Sailor's two million?" asked Rodolfo.

Manuel shook his head. "He must have already spent it all."

A lie, of course, Rodolfo thought. They sat in silence for a few moments, sipping inky coffee from the diminutive cups. At length Rodolfo said, "You left him like that?" He tapped the photo.

"With a Do Not Disturb sign on the outside of his door. He will be found eventually, of course. And the police will be duly informed."

Rodolfo was struck by a sudden disquieting thought. He put down his *cafezinho* cup with a clatter and knew a moment of sheer panic. "The *-poliça,* yes. The police. They will find another heart-attack victim in a hotel room. But what is to tell them that The Sailor is the murderer of the General's nephew? Unless they realize that, The Sailor's death may well be an exercise in futility. The investigation will still go on. The Big Ones will still be in danger."

Manuel waved a dismissive hand. "That thought occurred to me," he said with a trace of smugness. "Not belatedly, as it has to you, Rodolfo, but while I could still do something about it. Therefore, relax. I have taken care that all danger to you and The Big Ones shall end with the discovery of The Sailor's body."

Doubtfully, Rodolfo said, "How could you arrange that?"

To prolong Rodolfo's suspense, Manuel said, "Although my picture doesn't show it, The Sailor was writing a letter—or perhaps a man-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ifesto—when he suffered his fatal heart attack. Look at the picture. You can see the letter on the writing desk there, can you not?"

Looking at the photo, Rodolfo nodded. "I do not understand."

"You will when you read the letter." Manuel laughed. "I have a picture of it." He took another print from his camera case, this one a grainy blowup of a piece of Hotel Trocadero stationery bearing crudely printed words in a sprawling hand. The words were quite legible:

> General Pedro da Silva!
>
> This message is for you!
>
> Your nephew did not die by accident! We, The Brazilian Brotherhood for Democracy proudly take credit for his death!
>
> We killed him both as a demonstration of our power and as a warning to you. For *you, General da Silva, will be the next to die* unless these urgent reforms are addressed by you and your colleagues immediately!
>
> An end to our runaway inflation!
>
> Better housing for *favella* dwellers!
>
> A specific date set for free electi—

A wavering downsweeping stroke of the pen, like a horse's tail, descended from the last word of the note.

Rodolfo's expression as he finished reading combined relief, malice, jealousy, and approbation in almost equal parts. And yes, Manuel noted with satisfaction, even a faint hint of admiration.

"You wrote this?" Rodolfo said.

"I had a little time on my hands while I waited for The Sailor to expire."

Rodolfo interrupted him. "What's this Brazilian Brotherhood for Democracy?"

Manuel shrugged. "I made it up. There are now so many terrorist organizations seeking obscure ends that it will seem quite credible to General da Silva."

Rodolfo stood up. "I must report this at once to my superiors."

"When you see them; will you do something for me, Rodolfo?"

"What?"

"Be good enough to point out to them the small but important difference between a sensitive, perceptive assassin and a crude bully-boy off the docks."

"What difference do you mean?"

"Two million cruzeiros," said Manuel. "I'll pay for the coffee."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* short story by

ROBERT TWOHY

Doyle sat on the foot of the bed. So the dead man hadn't wanted to leave what he'd typed out in the open for the cops to find. He'd wanted it to be found by the guy who lived in this sloppy room, the only one likely to spot the torn scrap as unusual in the general mess. A guy who owned a lot of mystery books would know which one the name Gutman was from.

Another remarkable story from a prized—and prize-winning—contributor, Robert Twohy, whose soaring imagination never detracts from the solid story he has to tell. On the contrary . . .

TEETH LIKE LITTLE RADIOS

by ROBERT TWOHY

Doyle opened his door and saw in a heap on the floor in front of the desk a man in a good blue suit, a gun by his near hand—the right.

The face was mostly into the floorboards but enough left-profile showed to tell Doyle he didn't know him. Mid-thirties, pale knobby cheek, black hair, glassy blue eye—blood on the floor, face in the blood.

Doyle wondered who he was and why he had come here to shoot himself.

The door had been unlocked as usual, the crabby old lock too mean to bother with, considering what Doyle owned—an old Royal manual, a TV that rolled, some Goodwill clothes, and a lot of books in stacks around the room. So the man had needed only to turn the knob to get in. Which answered the how if not the who or why.

© 1984 by Robert Twohy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The blue suit was quality but looked too big for him. Same for the brown shoes.

Doyle walked down the short hall to Rudy's room, but he was out. He went downstairs and Dick was out, too. So was Lanigan in front.

He went down the steps of the peeling old rooming house, across Corbett to the parking lot, across it to the back door of Don's Deli, and out the front and east twenty yards to the phone stand, where he fed in a dime and asked how to get the Lindenvale P.D. A few seconds later he was telling a lady cop his name, address, and what he'd found in his room.

Cops, a doctor, gurney guys, the local reporter, and a photographer filling his sloppy room, cops and the reporter asking what time he'd left the house (7:00 P.M. yesterday), where he'd spent the night (friend's place in Belmont), whether he knew the dead man (no), if he'd ever seen him before (no), and whether his door had been locked (no).

As he left, the doctor said death had occurred three or four hours before, maybe. If true, the man had shot himself sometime before noon. The cops had looked for a suicide note and not found one. But the body had a wallet belonging to Montrose Case, M.D., who had called them last night to report he'd been robbed of his wallet, a gun, and his blue suit and brown shoes. Which meant the dead man was Joseph Cole, who had been on the psych ward at Community Hospital, three miles north of Corbett Street, until last night about 11:00, when he'd sneaked into the office behind Case, bopped him with something, stripped him, and took a .22 that was kept in the desk. The cops had been looking for Cole since.

One of them suggested that as the Southern Pacific depot was three and a half blocks east of this dump, Cole might have been heading there to catch a train to the City but got weary, wanted off the street, came up the stairs, tried the front door, found it open, and came inside "—Or is it locked at night?"

Doyle said it didn't have a lock.

The gurney guys had taken the body and everyone had left except for two cops, one a sergeant who was big and had hard eyes like a TV sergeant. He was standing at the desk on which was the Royal, a student lamp, an overfilled tin ashtray, a stack of manuscripts, some letters, folders, scraps and shreds of debris, old bills, new bills, a sock, a bell, an old orange. "All this your stuff?"

Doyle nodded, not proud of it.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"You a writer?" He was looking at the stack of manuscripts.

Doyle said he was.

"What d'you write?"

"Stories, mysteries . . ." He flopped a hand, meaning he doubted the sergeant would be much interested.

"I wonder if he could have typed a suicide note and stuck it in that pile there." Meaning the pile of manuscripts.

Type a note, then stick it out of sight? That didn't make much sense to Doyle—but what did he know?

The pile was about six inches high. Doyle had been going through some old material, rejects and never-finisheds, looking for a plot he could rewrite or springboard from. He was in a drought time for ideas.

The sergeant asked if he would give it a look.

"You mean for a suicide note?"

"Anything he might have typed."

"You think he typed something?"

"It's possible." The hard eyes watched as Doyle started through the pile of stories, looking for any typing that wasn't his. It seemed dumb but he wasn't going to argue.

The other cop had an expression like he was with Doyle.

The sergeant picked up the wastebasket, which happened to be more or less empty, poked around in it a few seconds, and set it back down. He picked up a book from a near stack, shook it, laid it on the desk, picked up another. Doyle wondered if he was going to shake all the six or eight hundred books in hope a suicide note might fall out. But he gave up after a few books and watched as Doyle flipped manuscript pages ostentatiously. The other cop yawned and looked out the window at nothing.

Doyle got a sudden twang as the edge of his glance hooked on something unexpected among the debris on the desk. But it wasn't a suicide note or anything typed or written, so two seconds later he'd forgotten the twang.

He laid the last manuscript back down. "Nothing here but my own stuff."

The sergeant shrugged. The other cop said, "Some suicides leave a note, some don't." Not a profound remark but probably true.

They went, leaving Doyle alone with a patch of sticky blood on the floorboards.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He got a towel, went to the bathroom to sop it, and ten minutes later had clean floorboards and a clean towel hanging over the tub.

He sat in the booth in the kitchen drinking coffee. Lanigan came in and he told him what had happened, and during the telling Rudy came in, then Dick.

Doyle described Joseph Cole and none of them knew him. None of them had heard a gunshot or any other noise from Doyle's room that morning.

Rudy said that about midnight last night he'd heard steps on the stairs and figured it was Doyle coming in late. Dick, in his room under Doyle, said he'd woke up for a nature call about two and had heard typing from upstairs—not unusual as Doyle often typed late.

"Did it go on long?" Doyle asked him.

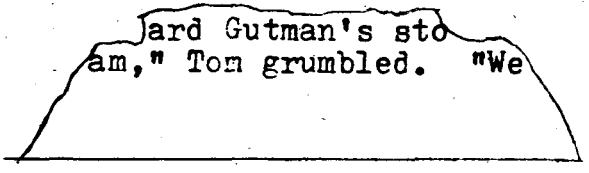
"I wouldn't know. I was back asleep in two minutes."

Rudy or Lanigan hadn't heard typing.

So the sergeant's hunch was right, Doyle thought, Cole *had* typed something. A suicide note? Whatever it was, he hadn't left it to be found. Maybe he'd torn it up, tossed the bits out the window to blow away . . . Why? Why not?

Doyle went back to his room, sat on the foot of the bed, and looked at the clean place on the grimy floorboards that was the only reminder that a stranger had come here to suicide.

His gaze wandered around, lit on top of the desk—and he got that twang again. He went over, fingered some debris, and picked up a scrap of paper, roughly shaped like a low mound, a couple of inches long and an inch or so high, with two short lines of print—the bottom of a page torn from a book. Six or eight hundred books in stacks around the room, each one a buddy, or if not a buddy someone to be respected. Doyle was sloppy about everything but books—he'd never tear a scrap from a book.



He didn't have to turn the scrap over to know what book it was torn from.

He went to a pile near the closet where the book, one he often

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

browsed, should sit right on top. It didn't, which figured—Joseph Cole, obviously a covert type of guy, would have moused it.

Doyle went four books down in the pile and picked up the black-covered book containing the five Hammett novels, including *The Maltese Falcon,* featuring Casper Gutman, the Fat Man.

He sat on the foot of the bed, Hammett on his lap. So Cole hadn't wanted to leave what he'd typed out in the open for the cops to find. He'd wanted it to be found by the guy who lived in this sloppy room, the only one likely to spot the torn scrap as unusual in the general mess. A guy who owned a lot of mystery books would know which one the name Gutman was from.

He let the book open where it wanted, which was near the middle, where lay a neat pack of twice-folded sheets.

He went to the desk, dumped the contents of the ashtray in the wastebasket, lit a Pall Mall, spread the sheets, and started reading.

In the hosp in NY they did dental work I didn't need. I think my teeth are little radios sending signals my brain picks up. So my thoughts are sometimes my own but mostly thiers. They know I'm here and what Im doing right now.

I see your a writer. Im not a writer but know to type as in the army a teletype opr. After army became a bartender as was always good with people.

A man came to me at the hotel in NY where Id' worked 12 yrs and said a man had noticed me and wd I like to work for him twice the wages? That he was good disposition with famous friends and business people & I would find interesting.

That was 3 yr ago. He was Mr Faire. I didnt know him thogh as bartender Id keep up on names & faces in Time Nwskweek People Etc and knew who was who if counted but never heard of him or saw his photo.

He lived in Conn, big old place many rooms, built 1800s by r.r. baron I learned, large grounds wooded privasy and nothing the man had told me in NY was untrue. Mr. Faire had pleasant manner & many famous guests.

I never learned what his business was and other servants didnt know either. 8 of us and some with him many yrs and all liked working for him and didn't know anything about his past or present or care. I did'nt either for long time.

Each servant had thier own room and well paid and I was happy in the work.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ive read some of your tales here on desk which not my taste. Some mysteries Ive read but not many and only good ones. Not an intelectual but have read a lot, lives of successful people and curr events. Also good spy novels for relaxing althogh not like they say, commun. vs. democracy, some of that yes but they dont get at the root or real reason. Which you will see as you persue this. Afterwards Ill shoot myself which is best as prfer to not live this way.

Good bartender picks up whos who in a room and from bits of conv. or jokes or expressions of face if more is going on than meets the naked eye. He has feelers out which becomes automatic and knows who counts and gets the feel if not the details of whats going on even when nothing is in particular. You dev. that skill if not abuse your senses with booze or pills being occupation risk many bartenders suffer.

Mr. Faires place had a name, Gathena, carved on a stone arch over the long drway, name from long ago I spose maybe an old book or song the r.r. barons' wife like so called it that.

What I'm writing is what I sensed over the 2½ yrs I was there and grad. put together. Have no proof & cd be getting signals throuh my teeth what to write and am mental case officially. Escaped from hosp here after hitting Dr with heavy desk stapler from desk in hall, and relieving his clothes & gun. It cd have been set up so I'd escape and come here & write this, then shoot myself as per some program of theirs. Thogh at time I hit him I thougt my own idea but think now probly set up for thier own reasons.

I think they sent me signals that got me to this room. The front door and this door unlocked and nobody here and typewriter sitting on desk v. conveniant. Their always studing human reactions to situations and setting up experiments. They proceed from a large body of scientif studies. I have no proof of that but have seen at Gathena renown scientists who I spotted as student of faces in photos in papers and TV & newsmgs as good bartender does

I saw mafia faces at Gathena. So the mafia is a factor as are scientists. Probly most of the mafia or the sc. world dont know Mr. Faire, only certain members are insiders. Its poss. to make use of a power group if you dev. a few people in it who do certain vital things at certain times, the maj. of the leadership with no idea the group is being used and grad. taken over.

Mr. Faire is large man wide but not fat, square shoulders & movements small head mild, eyes large lips dark oiled hair, soft small hands. Id never seen a photo of him and at Gathena there were none.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I never knew where he was from or even if American, migt be Brit Salv Arab or migt have oriental in him. Careful dresser dark coat bow tie pink flower. All who came to Gathena looked up to him not only physical being v. tall and wide thouh not fat but as superior person. Never arrogent always courteous and considrete and all looked up to him servants and guests.

I've always used free time mostly reading useful books and good spy novels for relax, not squadring time & money on foolishness or other vices, seeking improve self and planning one day open fine restaurant Mid-Manhattan, serving fine drinks & wd have if not going to work for Mr. Faire for good wages which in 4–5 yr would have enoug to retire and buy my place. He wd have wished me well. He knew me as faith and worthey servant & not his fault or wish I get in trouble.

I was in psych ward here 1 mo. Prior was in metal hosp in NY 5 mo. No bad treatment either place, both public hosps with reg, patients and drs and nurses who knew nothing of Gathena or what it meant. But dental work was done on me there so someone was in charge of experiment on me & in controll. The program is taking place now I think, thouh possible I'm just routinley insane and Mr. Faire and Gathena are only my feverd imagination, & my teeth may not be little radios at all.

But I think they hear me typing now and want me to type this then hide it so you will find it & not the police. Maybe they want you to do something with it. What or why I dont know or who you are.

Doyle raised his head and said, "No one. I write little stories and have no ambitions and have never dealt with or want to deal with famous people or the Mafia."

Who was he talking to?

—Teeth like little radios, programmed to bop the doctor, to come here, to write his document? Doyle laughed—and knew he was forcing it. What was funny? Was he laughing to assure someone that he knew the document was only a nut raving, that he wasn't taking it seriously? Who? Who could know or would care?

He sighed, lit his third Pall Mall since sitting, blew smoke, and read on.

People of the mafia, scientists and I recognized 2 senators from the US senate and a cabinet sec. I cant write the names which isn't

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strange if you know what being programed means. It means I cant write specific names even when try to. Mr. Faire is'nt really the name I knew him by. When I started this his name came out Faire and ev. time after that, & the same for Gathena not the real name but simular. If you tried to trace by clues here it wd be hard.

Maybe I' m jokking this is all joke but on who? In the end I shoot myself & is that a joke?

Ill shoot myself because they want me to or I do. Probly they do but I agree as I don't want to go go on living not knowing which is there program & which my own ideas. I have radios in my teeth or maybe dont, but if programmed to blieve it its the same.

Maybe to shoot myself is my idea not thiers, my way to fox them, they not wanting me to but doing it anyway as a joke on them to spoll the program.

You may be one of them with your slop room and nicatine addict and stacks of books & manuscrips, almost too much the povrished writers' garrett & I see the sly hand of the stage mgr which is what they do so well. Or maybe you have no connection with them but they found out about you for some reason of thier own & brought me here to type this and hide it for you to find and read. Why? I don't know. They are far beyond me and probly you too thoug you may/may not be of them, an insider.

2 senators and some other high figs. in govt. Ilusterous names from Hwood, actors dirs. a studio head I spotted. Scientists, mafia, leaders of labor & finance, the mediea & some execs from intl. corps. and military figs. and emnent scolars from Harv Standford Chico etc. I spoted them when came to Gathena having that gnack for faces seen in photos & reading who it is & remembering. They came openley or sometimes not, often in large groups sometimes smal sometimes individual sometimes quiet or other times with bright words and gousts of laugter

In time I got it that the great maj of guests had no connection with Mr. Faire or knew about him and were invited to Gathena as cover so insiders of thier groups wd not stand out conspicusly. Using my brains wd not have got me the picture but a bartender with trained feelers will over time get a shape that starts vague but in the end takes shape.

Large affairs sm affairs, serious conferences casual supers formal dinners & musical evnings. Disting. men & women. Mr Faire knew high people every field, man of many ints. entertaining for bus. and pleasure. Large gathring or somtimes a handfull or sometimes one

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

or 2 indls in his private study. Myself funcioning behind my port. bar at all the large affairs and most of the sm, never knowing particular pt of the meeting but becoming as time went by more & more clear that things were said by Mr. Faire & gestures and lt. remarks made that had meaning for those present who counted as insiders. This being under the surface and not out for the naked eye but my feelers went under the surface and vibrated to what went on there.

A good bartender knows how to rank people. Mr. Faire stood at the top & the others no matter who were less. My feelings of rank are true and this you can believe as this was before I was programed. He was superior to all who came to Gathena.

There were forieners, Brit French Slav others.

A russian had recentley come to NY to take over embasy post. I had seen on TV a smiling neat man. A reporter wanting maybe to make name for brash sang out that wasnt it wellknown he represented the KGB wasnt that his real assigment at the embasy?

He said in good Eng not so, he was diplomat no more.

A few wks after, I saw him at Gathena in Mr. Faines pri. study and also there was a person I'd seen in a group picture in Nwswk of state Dept. officials. Not a famous person just one in the group. But in Mr. Faires study he was the equal of the KGB man and both were less than Mr. Faire.

KGB man a drinker, State dep. man had a drink or 2, russian drank with no effect that showed. Mr. Faire drank bottle water as always. The liquor inventory at Gathena was huge but no part of it ever went his way.

He had asked I be in & out which I was and when in it was relaxed and goodnatured and I heard nothing of any meaning but under the lt. talk knew that Mr. Faire was giving instructions that the other 2 wd act on in the way he told them.

To say how I knew this is no pt. as was felt is all, same as other groups & meetings when I knew private words were being given to insiders which there is no way to describe how I knew this but did, & I knew the KGB man and State man had come to Gathena for instruction regarding a situation and wd act on what they were told by Mr. Faire.

Soon after that meeting 3 Russ. spies were arrested in NH, involving coded documents stuffed into hollow tree in NH in the moonlight and arrested by FBI and CIA agents and NH troopers on bicycles posing as bicycle club which caused 2 days excitement in press & Ev. News and that was the end of it and no word as to what

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the documents were and no more word ever of what was done with the spies.

It may have been a joke but on who, and why?

Mr. Faire sent for me. That was 6 Mo ago. He was his wide friendly self as always.

He said it was time we had a good talk as he had been wanting to have one with me. Did I like Gathena & did I find his guests interesting?

I told him very.

He asked wd I share my impressions?

He was smiling and eyes mild as always there is nothing hypnosis about him but without intend or thinking I began telling the thoughts Id devd. over past few mo while he sat quiet noding sometimes or rub his mouth in thouhful way.

I said I felt he represent a group I did'nt know who it was but all who came to Gathena were subsiduary. Some who came were insiders most were not and didn't know he represent a group but insiders did and were subsiduary. The KGB man was and so was the man from state dept. Like all other insiders they took instruction from Mr. Faire and worked for common purpose. All leaders representing govts large & small or weak or strong who came to Gathena as insiders were subsiduary. Govts wd swear and yell at each other and catch each other in spy rings and soforth and threat of war and cut off trade but none of it meant what seemed to the naked eye. Which was what I meant when I said some pages back that spy novels dont get at the root which is that nations along with the various power groups domestic and intl play the tun Mr. Faire tells them to.

Not a dance but a play with scenes laid out for the groups & nations large & small to follow, ordinary people of the world, 95% not knowing the play is for them as they are the audience paying for the play.

Thier elected or apptd or selfdeclared leaders making laws and speeches as planned & designed by Mr. Faire's group. even the leaders who have no idea its a play and think its reality and their in control are not, being under influence or order of their partic. power group or groups all of which have insiders who come to Gathena to be told the lines to follow.

Drama has to have villians and a large part of Mr. Faires groups' work is creation and maintenance of villains. The people give up money & rights and beg protection against the villians created for

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

purpose of getting them to give up money & rights. New & chillinger scenes and schemes & weapons are created all for the play.

I talked on, all the impressions I'd taken in during the 2½ yrs spilling out and he listning and occasionly noding or a thougtful frown and finaly asked, did I really believe in such a group?

I said yes.

Why would powerful groups and nations give up power he said?

For their own good. For protection against themselves. They wd kill each other & use up resources wastefuly unless controled so gave power to a control group. It was how they kept power and control of thier people which they would lose otherwise from greed and stupidity.

So I thought his group controled all the power groups of the world and the nations large & small?

Yes.

And all the weapons the terrible nuculear weapons, did I blieve the govts didnt control them but his group controled them?

I said yes, the weapons were props to fill the 95% with sense of horror and helpless and shame and doom. Fear was what the weapons were for and every so often a leader wd be instructed or influenced to shake them and howl and the people wd cower and give up more of thier possessions and rights, whatever was asked if they be alowed to go on living rumps up & faces in the dirt and the bombs not come raining down.

He rubbed his mouth gazing at me and said in quiet tone that either I had lost my mind or he and this group I imagined were terribly evil.

I said I had'nt used the word and the pt. wasn't good or evil but control was the pt. But sometimes things got out of control as no group can be on top of ev. situation even with great thinkers and scholars and scientists from Harv MITT UC Mich and such places as I had spotted at Gathena, with all the astonish tecnology they cd devise, that mstakes cd be made and probly had. Wars cd be programed by great coreographers with ev. contingancy considered but yet cd dev. in their own way, not paying attention to the program, causing great loss of precous resources of the earth, and probly many lesser errors had been made too. But probly the group learned from such errors and theyre system was always improving which I hoped, as an error in regards nuculear props wd mean the play was over never to be revived as the theater wd be gone.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He said sadley, you were my best bartender, meaning me, and was regretfull I had lost my mind.

I wished all I had said was unsaid but it did'nt really matter because all that had been in my mind he had known before I spoke. Which was why he had sent for me and said it was time we talked

I went to my room to prepare to leave knowing there was no future for me at Gathena.

I carred my bags to the big garage for a doz. cars and got in my old Plymouth and 2 men were in back. Something went over my face and I passed out & a day or some days later woke up in bed and a nurse was their so I knew it was a hosp, which she told me the name in NY, and that I was on the mental ward.

A Dr. came and said Id had a breakdown but shdnt worry as time & care wd cure my distortions.

Mr. Faire came with sev. of the servants for a friendly visit, I not saying anything about what I had said at our last talk as wqnting to show I was getting well. He said I wd be back at my duties soon but shortley after that I had extensive dental work thoug not needed and a little later in a plane for the hosp in Calf., where all were kind and it was pleasant but my teeth were sending me signals that I shd escape and get the story of Gathena told thouh why they want me to tell it I dont know. But right now Im getting a clear signal to leave it for you to find & not the police who are too practical to pay attention to what someone officially insane woud write and you a writer may not be.

Or maybe it's all my idea not thiers and my teeth are no more radios than yours & this is just ordinary insanity or a joke by me.

Your style of writing shows you try to imitate Dashell Hammett and probly shd get your own style but maybe better off as is. Hammett is v. good and Ive read some of his. I see one and will put this paper in it with a clue telling you where to look, for you to do with what you will. You may be an insider with Mr. Faire or an outsider being used in this experiment without your knowlege for there own reason. I dont know which is the ansewer but feel I will have done as I shd by turning the paper over to you wether their idea or mine. I don't know which and ca'nt live that way anymore not knowing if I am me or them. So I wont be here to know what you do with the paper.

Maybe you are to write a story from it. If so it will have to be written as fiction as I have no facts to give you, only impressions as felt by a good bartender under the surface of things.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This whole paper cd be just a joke by me. Just a joke, to have some fun before I put a bullet throu my head.

If it's a program and your part of it they may want it written as fiction that can be dismised without any seriousness & laughed off as just a fiction story like told by a bartender who had a breakdown and went crazy.

I think its a program and that you'll do as they figure you will do with it. Althoug they do make errors sometime.

I wish you well whatever you do with it and have a good life & that they dont make an error that will end the play and the theater.

Joseph Cole Apr 17 1983

DETECTIVERSE

STICKS AND STONES

by M. EDWARD HOLDEN

"Malcolm McSludge,"
Said the hard-hearted judge,
"You're a sneak-thief, a killer, and worse—
You stole from a church,
Left your wife in the lurch,
And grabbed off a poor widow's purse!"

"That all may be true,
But if I were you,"
Replied the accused, with some gall,
"I'd take this advice:
If you can't say what's nice,
Then please don't say nothin' at all!"

© 1984 by M. Edward Holden.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

a *NEW* Inspector Ghote story by

H. R. F. KEATING

"Fuzz. Bloody fuzz." Tigga spat the words out fiercely. "That's all the idea you have of solving crimes—grab the first person your fancy takes and beat a confession out of him."

"Miss Tigga, I am not at all beating," Ghote said.

"Oh, no, not yet. But wait until you get him in one of your cells. I know what sort of things go on there. Torture, torture, torture, till your victim doesn't know who or what he is . . . !"

MURDER MUST NOT AT ALL ADVERTISE, ISN'T IT?

by H. R. F. KEATING

The Cabin Killer Strikes Again. Inspector Ghote, getting out of the police car and looking up at the sky-zooming building in Bombay's tower-jostling, rich-to-bursting Nariman Point area, found the phrase, in just those English words, pulsating in his mind.

The Cabin Killer. It was what the more sensational papers had taken to calling the fellow whose modus operandi appeared to be entering well equipped offices and making away with the prize pickings from the boss's own cabin, not hesitating, if disturbed, to attack. And, just because the Press had seized on this particular criminal among all Bombay's hundreds, orders had come down to the C.I.D. from the Minister for Home himself to make the case their Number One priority.

So when a jabbering voice on the telephone had reported that "The Cabin Killer has struck again," yet one more officer had been taken off all other duties. Himself. And since Crime Branch's top investigator, the renowned Assistant Commissioner "Dasher" Dabholkar,

© 1984 by H. R. F. Keating.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in charge of the inquiry, was already out in the field elsewhere, he had been sent to the office of Shalimar Associates, the big advertising firm, whose boss, so the report had said, was the killer's latest victim.

The Cabin Killer Strikes Again. Ghote tried to shake the headline words out of his mind. They were nonsense only, he told himself. The man was hardly a killer. He was a common thief only, if one with something of a new angle. No one else, so far as the clacking mechanical files in Records could turn up, had hit on the trick of making for the top man's cabin itself when slipping into a set of offices at a time few people were about, intent on quick robbery. It was usually simply an unguarded typewriter that was taken, or any other obviously sellable object.

But this fellow had certainly gone one better. Somewhere he must have come to learn that in the boss's cabin of most of the posh firms in areas like Nariman Point, there would be a bottle or two of the best. Generally Chivas Regal whisky. Generally in the bottom right-hand drawer of the big glossy desk.

And twice, just twice, in a career of crime that Dasher Dabholkar had had traced back over nearly three years, the fellow had been caught red-handed. And once, once only, when he had snatched up a heavy object and lashed out, his victim had died from injuries received. The second attack victim, in fact, had suffered no more than a cracked jawbone and a nasty bruise. But for some reason the papers had decided to blow up the perpetrator as "The Cabin Killer."

Who now had "struck again." Or perhaps not. You never could tell with excited witnesses phoning in. There had been something about a sword, too. That the Cabin Killer had used "Shivaji's sword."

Well, that was nonsense once again. The sword reputed to have been wielded in times long ago by the hero of all Marathi-speaking Bombay, Shivaji the Great, was, it was well known, in British hands. In some museum or other in London. And all attempts to get it restored to India had so far failed. So how could the Cabin Killer have used Shivaji's sword?

Ghote heaved a sigh.

Ah, well, better get up there and sort it all out.

At the penthouse offices of Shalimar Associates, whisked smoothly upwards in a steel-walled lift, he began to have doubts about how easy that sorting-out would be. The place was Western. Very, very Western. Even the reception area was covered in one vast layer of carpet, a dark-brown smooth unblemished surface that seemed to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

proclaim "No chappals here. Shoes only." Above, from a huge expanse of ceiling broken into different panelled areas all in immaculate white, there hung curious futuristic lights, each one lit even though outside the sun was beating down in its usual blaze of whiteness. However, closed slatted blinds in dark-brown plastic were taking care of the sun.

And, as if all this was not daunting enough, there were the people. There seemed to be dozens of them, almost all dressed in smart Western clothes, girls in hugging jeans and most of the men, too. And all of them chattering in English, jabbering, gesticulating, and paying no attention at all to himself, a lone figure, ahead of the fingerprint and photography team, dressed—he became acutely conscious of the fact—in simple shirt and pants, a good deal the worse for a long morning in dirty, sweat-springing Bombay.

But this would not do. There had been a murder here. Or so they said. And he had come to investigate.

He marched forward over the smooth brown lake of carpet and up to the nearest person to him, a young woman even more animated than anyone else, wearing a deep-red thin silk Lucknow kurta above the obligatory jeans.

"Madam," he said. "Excuse me. It is C.I.D. Inspector Ghote. A murder has been reported, isn't it?"

The girl turned. "Well," she said, "it's the fuzz. At last."

Yet, unwilling as he was to accept this form of address, Ghote could not help responding to the cheerful smile that went with it.

"Who is it, please, I am speaking with?" he asked, less bleakly than he had intended.

"The name's Tigga," the girl answered. "I'm a copywriter here."

"Very well, Miss Tigga. Now, where is the deceased?"

"Yes, the deceased. I'll take you to his cabin. He's—he was—" Unexpectedly, the girl choked back a sudden lump in the throat. "He was our Creative Director. Managing Director, too. The boss, in fact. Mr. Patel. Known everywhere as Billy Patel. He was— Inspector, he was always so alive. Such a go-getter."

"Yes, yes, I understand. But, Miss Tigga, we must please proceed to the cabin in question."

"Yes, of course. This way."

She began to lead him through the still-jabbering throng of people, all young, all still highly excited.

After a moment she turned back to him. "By the way, just to get it straight," she said. "It's not Miss Tigga, actually. It's Miss Kelkar.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Neeta Kelkar. But I'm always called Tigga. I was called it after Tigger in the Winnie the Pooh books, you know?"

"Yes," said Ghote, who did not know.

"I ought to have one of those name-badges we always seem to get given at conferences and seminars and things," she went on. "Then no one would have to ask, and I wouldn't have to make any more explanations."

"No," said Ghote.

They had passed the glossy reception counter, adorned with a huge vase of white flowers, a white telephone, and nothing else, and were heading for one of the wide corridors behind it. But abruptly the ebullient Tigga halted again.

"Roger!" she called out. "Roger!"

A young man with a trim beard, wearing the inevitable close-fitting jeans and a crisp shirt that put Ghote's sweat-saddened one to shame, came up from behind them.

He gave Tigga a wary glance. "Friends?" he said.

"Friends," she answered decisively.

She turned back to Ghote. "This is Roger Rajinder, youngest account executive at Shalimar Associates," she announced. "Oh, gosh, another name complication. Naresh Rajinder, I should have said. But known to all as Roger on account of a tremendous resemblance to a certain British film star. Roger, this is the C.I.D. inspector."

Roger Rajinder gave her a mock glare of rage before turning to Ghote.

"Don't mind this dreadful girl, Inspector," he said. "What can I do for you? You're on your way to poor Billy's cabin?"

"Yes, yes. But, tell me please, what is this about a sword? Was the killing committed with a sword only?"

"Shivaji's sword, Inspector, no less," Roger answered. "Or, in point of fact, a mock-up of Shivaji's sword we had made for our new Cocopuffs campaign. It was on Billy's desk, and it seems that when he came back for something or other during the lunch break he disturbed this fellow, who must have picked up the sword and stabbed him. It's a terrible thing."

He glanced at Tigga as he said these last suddenly saddened words and got from her an answering look. Ghote felt a dart of warmth. These two young people were in love. He knew it as surely as if it had been written on a matching pair of the name badges Tigga had talked about. They were in love, and out of nowhere death had entered their lives. Violent death.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But he was a police officer, sent to investigate an offense under Indian Penal Code Section 302.

"Take me to Mr. Patel's cabin, please," he said.

They found two other people in Billy Patel's cabin, standing over the body, from which, sure enough, the hilt of a wide-bladed curving sword protruded. Roger Rajinder introduced them, with unexpected formality.

"Inspector, this is Mr. Shantaram Das, our senior account executive—and, I suppose, now in charge of things—and this is Mr. Tarlok Singh, our accountant."

Shantaram Das was immediately pleasing to Ghote. To begin with, he was not a young man. Young and, Ghote added to himself, irresponsible. He was a dignified figure of perhaps fifty, weightily plump. And he was not dressed in jeans. Indeed, he was almost at the opposite extreme, in flowing white kurta and thigh-clasping white churidar, the very picture of tradition. The Sikh accountant, on the other hand, was as glossy as everyone else Ghote had seen, down to his wide maroon necktie exactly matching his neat maroon turban.

Ghote decided to ignore him and address himself exclusively to the dignified Mr. Das.

"Tell me, please," he said, "the exact circumstances of the matter."

"Certainly, Inspector. It was, in point of fact, Tarlok here and myself who found poor Billy. We came in to tell him about some clients we had been lunching, and there he was as you see him now. Dead on the floor and with Shivaji's sword buried deep in his back. Of course, we knew at once who had done it. The Cabin Killer. We sensed that, didn't we, Tarlok, even before we saw that Billy's new desk-computer was missing?"

"Well, yes," the Sikh agreed. "Only, if you remember, Shantaramji, I was not actually sensing."

"Yes, yes," Shantaram Das concurred. "I am the one who senses in this office, and you, Tarlok, have the head for detail. All those figures at your fingertips."

He turned to Ghote with a smile of great sweetness, tinged a little with sadness. "Inspector," he said, "you see in me a poet. I am, I admit, on occasion a little carried away. I exaggerate. Isn't that so, Tarlok, Roger, Tigga? I exaggerate, don't I, Tigga, my dear?"

"Yes, Shantaramji, you exaggerate," Tigga confirmed with a heavy mock sigh.

"But, Inspector," the self-confessed poet went on, "Inspector, be-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lieve me, you can trust me to tell you every detail exactly of what happened to poor Billy. That vile criminal must be caught, and, if there is anything I can do to help, that I will do. Even to sacrificing the element of poetic enhancement."

"Very good, Mr. Das," Ghote replied. "So, kindly tell me about the—what was it you called it?—the desk-computer?"

"Ah, yes. Yes. A clue for you, Inspector. A good, solid unpoetic clue. You see, poor Billy had on trial on his desk this week the very newest mini-computer. Smuggled, of course. He saw a great future for it at Shalimar Associates. Instant assessments. Files at his fingertips. All our accounts revolutionized. A very valuable piece of apparatus, Inspector. Just the thing the Cabin Killer would like. And it's gone. Gone. You couldn't have better proof than that, could you?"

"A very valuable machine?" Ghote asked. "A very, very advanced one?"

"Exactly, Inspector. You have seized on—what shall I say—the nub. The nub of this business. I can see that you are no poet, my dear fellow, and a very good thing that is, too. It is down-to-earth qualities we are wanting to get this appalling killer. Yes, down-to-earth qualities."

"Down to earth," Ghote said slowly, echoing the words.

He turned from Billy Patel's huge glass-topped desk, where the missing computer was represented by a square cleared space, and, carefully circumnavigating the body on the floor with the hilt of the false Shivaji's sword protruding from it, he went over to the room's expanse of slat-covered windows, through which the noises of bustling Bombay—furious (and illegal) horn blasts, the roar of heavy construction trucks round the ever upward-leaping new buildings, and shrill hawkers' cries—could be heard more distinctly than in the air-conditioned other parts of the Shalimar Associates office he had walked through.

"Yes," he said, "I thought that would be so."

He reached out and lifted back one of the dark-brown slatted blinds. The window behind it was wide open. It was through here that the street noises were penetrating this above-it-all eminence. "I thought there must be a window open," he said. "A little strange, isn't it?"

He put his head through the large square opening and craned out. "A garden far below," he called back into the room. "And, yes, right in the middle of a clump of what is looking like bakain bushes there

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is a square grey object."He pulled himself back in and turned to look at the four members of the Shalimar Associates staff. "Now what would you be thinking such an object must be?" he asked.

There was a silence. It was broken at last by Tigga.

"The desk-computer?" she asked. "Is that what you are saying, Inspector? That the Cabin Killer threw the desk-computer out of the window? But why should he do that?"

"Yes," Ghote answered. "That is an excellent question altogether, Miss Tigga. Why would a fellow like this so-called Cabin Killer, a fellow who is liking to take bottles of first-class imported whisky from the desks of office bosses and then give a clean slip to all, why should he pilfer a very, very advanced computer and then throw it through an open window only?"

"Because—" Tigga answered slowly "—because—are you saying this, Inspector?—Billy was not murdered by the Cabin Killer at all?"

"I am much inclined to be thinking that, certainly," Ghote said.

"And if that is so," Tigga went on, her eyes intent in quick thought, "if that is so, is this what you call an inside job, Inspector?"

"I think it very well may be," Ghote answered. "An inside job, yes. Mr. Patel was murdered by someone in these offices."

He would have dearly liked to have seen the reactions his announcement had got—a glance of suspicion from one to another, a look of fear perhaps, or even the murmured name of some person not in the room. Any fragment of a hint would have helped at that moment. But instead, everyone's attention had been caught by a loud commotion outside the door, and a moment later this was thrust open by Sergeant Sawant, the fingerprint wallah, together with one of the police photographers and a pair of constables with a stretcher ready to take the body for medical examination.

While Sawant was at work, puffing and dusting, and the photographer, with a great deal of unnecessary crouching and leaping, was taking his pictures, Ghote did his best to learn something more from the poetic Mr. Das, who had begun, in an unpoetic way, to be more concerned with reestablishing office routine. Both Roger Rajinder and the dapper Tarlok Singh had been sent to "put an end damn quick to all that hulla-gulla outside" and only Tigga remained. It was from her that Ghote was able to discover a little more about the dead man. He had, it seemed, been a go-getter indeed, a great figure in the Bombay advertising world, renowned for a lifestyle almost as flamboyant as a film star's.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Inspector," Tigga concluded, "Billy created more first-class ads per rupee of billing than anyone else in the industry."

Ghote almost asked "What industry?" so surprised was he to learn that the concoction of advertisements and advertising films was dignified with such a description. But, in spite of her Western ways, he was beginning to like Tigga very much and he forbore.

At last Sergeant Sawant had covered almost every surface in the cabin with his powders dark and light and the photographer had clicked and flashed away from every conceivable angle. "Okay to take away body, Inspector sahib?" the senior constable asked.

Ghote waved assent, battered and inwardly furious at the way his investigation had got lost amid all the play-acting.

The constables laid their stretcher beside Billy Patel's heavy corpse and, with an *"ek, do, teen,"* lifted it up and over.

And the moment they had done so a small object just underneath the recumbent form caught Ghote's eye.

He crouched quickly and picked it up by its edges. It was a metal lapel badge, shocking-pink in color, with one word clearly painted on it in fancy black letters. *Roger.*

Slowly, Ghote got to his feet with the little disc cupped in his hand. He was aware that both Tigga and Shantaram Das had seen what he had picked up. Tigga—he remembered how vividly he had been sure she was in love with the handsome Roger Rajinder—was holding herself unnaturally still, as if the blood in her veins had turned to a steely strong skeleton. The poetical Mr. Das's eyes were flicking to and fro like a fugitive looking every which way for escape from an utterly fearful situation.

Ghote elected to address him.

"Mr. Das, tell me please, this is a badge such as is worn by staff members of Shalimar Associates?"

The massively large poet did not answer for some moments. Then he heaved a deep sigh.

"Inspector, it is."

"And who else besides Mr. Roger Rajinder is known in the firm by this British name?"

"No one, Inspector."

"Then I must at once see Mr. Rajinder," Ghote said, turning to the door.

But he was not to get through it. Like a leaping ball of fire, red-kurta-clad Tigga leapt to it before him. She stood guarding it like a panther, all claws to defend her cubs.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Now, Miss Tigga, please," Ghote said.

"Fuzz. Bloody Fuzz." Tigga spat the words out fiercely. "That's all the idea you have of solving crimes—grab the first person your fancy takes and beat a confession out of him."

"Miss Tigga, I am not at all beating."

"Oh, no, not yet. But wait until you get him in one of your cells. I know what sort of things go on there. Torture, torture, torture, till your victim doesn't know who or what he is!"

"Miss Tigga, I am wanting to question only. Even you must see there is prima facie case against Rajinder sahib."

"Faked evidence. Another rotten fuzz trick."

"Miss Tigga, that badge was underneath the body. You must have been seeing that clearly, as was Mr. Das here also. It is possible, I am willing to admit, that the badge was lying there on the floor long before Mr. Billy Patel was killed. But it is not at all likely, isn't it? In such a smart cabin as this, with the clean, clean carpet and not a speck of untidiness anywhere. You must see that."

"All right!" Tigga shot back, not moving an inch from the doorway. "The badge was there, I know that! But you are going to build up a whole case on just one thing! That, plus beating and torture!"

Ghote sighed.

"Miss Tigga, I am guaranteeing absolutely that nothing of torture will be used."

He said the words with all the firmness he could muster. But he knew in his heart that they were not strictly true. Very well, the Bombay C.I.D. did not use the crude methods reported from distant parts of India. But there was such a thing as interrogating a suspect all night. There was such a thing as dangling a cigarette in front of a deprived smoker. And a hundred and one other tricks and strategies.

Still Tigga did not move. Instead she began calling out.

"Roger! Roger! Get out quick! Roger, this damn plainclothes wallah wants to get you! Roger!"

The door of Billy Patel's cabin was thick, but Ghote wondered whether on the far side someone might hear and summon Roger Rajinder. Who might then take to his heels. "Miss Tigga, stand away from that door," he said.

"Never."

He did not wait for any further defiance. Two hands shooting forward to grasp the girl by her elbows, a quick flex of the knees, a lift, a swing round, and she was dumped safely out of his way.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

He found Roger Rajinder at his desk and took him back at once to C.I.D. Headquarters for questioning.

It was not, however, in a scream-proof cell that he questioned the young man but in his own office, its bat-wing doors open to the day—even if a wiry constable was standing outside. But it came as no surprise when Roger implacably denied that he had gone back to the Shalimar Associates offices during the time they were almost deserted at the lunch hour, even though he admitted that he did not have an alibi for the whole of that period.

No, the boy said, he could not account for his badge being under Billy Patel's body. He had worn it two days previously at a conference to present the firm's new Cocopuffs campaign. He must have taken it off afterwards, but he could not remember doing so or seeing it at any time since then. He had never wished Billy Patel any harm. He had received an increment from him only one month earlier. It had been every bit as much as he had hoped to get.

Ghote told him that he would be kept in custody overnight.

A locked door during the long hours of darkness was often enough, with a person used to a comfortable middle-class life, to reduce the proudly defiant to the readily cooperative.

And an hour or two of extra suspense when daylight came again was a useful topper-up for any self-induced fears. So Ghote went first next morning not to Headquarters but to the tower-top offices of Shalimar Associates. He asked to see Shantaram Das—now, he gathered, in charge following Billy Patel's demise.

He found him, indeed, in the late Billy's cabin, its wide desk already covered with papers. And with him he found Tigga. Not in the most favorable circumstances.

With the object of preventing Shantaram Das donning his poetic mantle before answering some simple questions about the routines and politics of Shalimar Associates, he had stopped anyone announcing him and had entered the cabin without even knocking. He found Tigga standing closely beside the bulky seated form of Shantaram Das, with his arm round her waist.

It might have been there as the protective act of a mere uncle figure, he told himself later. Certainly, after an instant's flinching the plump poet had left the arm where it was for a few seconds and then had said, all kindness and consideration, "Well now, you run along, Tigga, my dear, and don't worry your head. Perhaps Inspec-

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

torji had already come to tell me that young Roger would be released right away."

"No, sir and madam," Ghote said, "I regret my inquiries are not yet complete."

Shantaram Das chuckled comfortably. "But I am sure that they will be in a few hours only," he said, "and then we would have young Roger in his seat again."

Tigga made no answer before she left the room. Unless to glare long and hard at Ghote was an answer.

"Yes, yes," Shantaram Das said as the door closed, "the poor kid is in a hell of a state. I feel it my duty to offer what comfort I can."

Ghote did not pursue the subject. He decided that the poet's attitude to Miss Tigga was something that must wait for examination when he had leisure. For one thing, it had seemed to him that the girl had not been at all averse to that friendly encircling arm. But, if this was so, it spoilt the picture he had built up for himself of young love looking all the world in the face, a picture he had by no means managed to rid himself of even when he had been questioning Roger Rajinder the night before. For all that he had told himself again and again that such a notion was no more than *filmi* nonsense.

So it was in no very cordial mood that he questioned Shantaram Das about the people of Shalimar Associates. Whenever the poet showed signs of building up one of his towering, improbable fantasies, Ghote ruthlessly brought him down to earth. But, long though the session was, he found at its end that he had not learned anything revealingly new. Roger Rajinder was the bright hope of the firm and had recently received a large increment. Tarlok Singh was a wizard with figures and had "a head for detail that is positively amazing." One or two minor employees might have small grudges about this or that—a bright idea rejected, a hoped-for increment not arriving as soon as expected—but that seemed to be all, if what Shantaram Das had told him was the truth.

And, bar those beginnings of poetic flights, he had seemed more than anxious to produce long-forgotten half grudges and half injustices for Ghote's consideration, even down to a peon he remembered as having been sacked some three years earlier, "a one-eyed fellow, Inspector, a man whom I never did trust, with a distinct air of malevolence."

"Please," Ghote had asked sharply, "what is malevolence?"

"Ah. Hum. Yes. Well, shall we say 'ill will?' "

"Ill-will towards which persons?"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Oh, I do not think towards anyone in particular. A general ill-will, or as we say malevolence. Difficult to pin down, you know. The fellow's name was Budhoo, as I recall. You would be able to locate him easily enough. I think he still uses the garden wall outside here to sleep under. I have seen him there when I have been working late. Find him, Inspector. He is a very very likely suspect for you. Very very likely altogether."

"I do not think that will be necessary," Ghote said.

And on that quelling note he had left. To go back to Headquarters and see what a long night's reflection and an awkward couple of hours afterwards had done for Roger Rajinder.

They seemed to have done nothing. No, the boy said again, he had no reason, conceivably, for wanting to kill Billy Patel. He had admired him. He was a man who had come up from nothing and had ended with a fine flat in the prestigious Pali Hill area. He had an imported car. He was a big success. No one had known more about creating a need and then backing it to the hilt with films in every one of India's many cinemas, with newspaper and magazine ads of startling originality, with hoardings that had made all Bombay laugh.

Roger hoped he would do half as well himself and be able to marry someday and find a flat and have a family.

Ghote thought of Tigga and Shantaram Das's uncle-encircling arm. Or not so unclelike?

He took his questioning back to the matter of the badge under the body. But Roger still had no idea, he said, how it had got from his pocket, where he supposed he must have put it, to the floor of Billy Patel's cabin.

Ghote, increasingly exasperated, began to wonder about a bit of "torture." Hitherto he had let young Roger smoke as much as he wanted. If he deprived him now of cigarettes . . . But the thought of Tigga's jibes made him determined to break down his suspect without the least suspicion of illicit pressure. Indeed, he went even further in the direction of scrupulous behavior. Conscious that in all probability he was being a sentimental fool, he allowed Tigga to come and see Roger in an interview room, unsupervised.

In the meanwhile, he occupied himself in going through the list of Shalimar Associates employees Shantaram Das had arranged for him to get, in the faint hope of finding something pointing to another possible murderer.

Then, late at night, when he hoped that Roger Rajinder would be

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relaxing, sure that his interrogation was over for the day, he had him brought to his office once again. And, bracing himself, he determined to make use of a thoroughly unfair trick.

"Well, Mr. Roger," he said, without any other preliminary, "what do you think of your girl friend now? You know she is allowing Mr. Shantaram Das all sorts and kinds of liberties, isn't it? She has deserted you altogether, I am thinking. Yes, altogether deserted."

But Roger Rajinder simply smiled in answer.

"What for are you smiling only?" Ghote burst out. "I am telling you that Miss Tigga is making up to Mr. Shantaram Das. She has given you the push altogether. She is sure you are the guilty party. Damn sure."

Roger Rajinder smiled again.

"In that case, Inspector," he said, "why do you think she is in Shalimar Associates offices at this very moment trying to find evidence that will get me off the hook? Oh, yes, I know about Shantaram. He's a thoroughly naughty old man, and, yes, Tigga did this morning allow him some liberties. She was upset. But when you let her come to see me she told me each and every thing that had happened between them."

Ghote thrust aside the fury he felt with himself for having so unwittingly strengthened Roger's resistence. Something more urgent claimed attention.

"Evidence?" he snapped. "What sort of evidence is this that Miss Tigga is trying to find? Why did she not inform me of any evidence there is to be found?"

Roger shrugged. "I think she doesn't like you very much, Inspector," he said. "Nothing personal, just a general distrust of the police. So she means to get hold of her evidence first, and tell you afterwards."

Ghote felt a sudden inward lurch of despondency.

"What sort of evidence is this? I demand to know."

"Oh, I am not going to hold out on you, Inspector. I've learned too much respect for you in the last twenty-four hours to want to do that, whatever Tigga feels. It's just this: she has got it into her head that Billy may have been killed by a spy."

"A spy? A spy? What utter damn nonsense is this? Is Shalimar Associates a Secure Defense Area? What is it you are saying?"

"Well, no, not exactly a spy of that sort," Roger answered. "But what you might call an industrial spy, Inspector. The advertising *duniya* is riddled with spies of that sort, you know. Chaps out to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pinch good ideas and use them in their own firms' campaigns. It's a serious problem."

Ghote thought for an instant.

"And what you and Miss Tigga are saying is that in the Shalimar Associates offices there is someone who is such a spy, and that Mr. Billy Patel perhaps found him in the act and was killed?"

"That's what Tigga thinks certainly. And I can't see any other motive for Billy's murder. Can you, Inspector?"

"Never mind what motive I am seeing or not seeing. You say Miss Tigga is searching the offices for evidence just now?"

"She is, Inspector."

"Then I am gong there myself, *ek dum.*"

At the late hour of the evening, it did not take Ghote long to get from the Crawford Market C.I.D. Headquarters to the almost deserted business area of Nariman Point, its tall unlit tower buildings huge and ghostlike in the darkness. But at the top of the tower that housed Shalimar Associates a light was glinting out.

Possessed by a sudden inexplicable need to hurry, Ghote routed out the building's chowkidar.

"No lift working, Inspector sahib," the sulky, half asleep old Pathan guard said. "Stairs only. Many, many."

Ghote shook him off and set out at a rapid trot up the concrete steps winding behind the gleaming lift shafts of the tall building.

Up and up he ran. Before long his rapid trot was reduced to a steady plod. And before much longer that plod became yet slower. But, sweat rich on his face and clammy round his body, he forced his weary legs on. With each step his sense of urgency had grown.

Tigga Kelkar was alone in the Shalimar Associates offices. What was she finding there? What evidence could there be that there was a spy from some other concern on the staff? And that this person, whoever they were, had murdered Billy Patel? Yet unlikely though he thought the notion to be—a spy? to discover the secret of a new advertisement? what rot—somehow he felt that all might not be well, that all was not well, up in the penthouse offices above.

Mouth wide open, gasping for air, he pushed his lead-heavy legs into moving faster. And at last he was at the top of the building. The outer door of Shalimar Associates was standing wide open and, although the futuristic lights of the reception area were not on, a dim glow from somewhere farther inside the offices made it possible to see vaguely the whole of the wide brown-carpeted space.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Then, as he stood, head bent, deeply breathing, attempting to decide what to do first, there came a sudden thundering sound from somewhere on the far side of the broad reception counter with its huge vase of white flowers palely visible in the gloom.

It was the sound of running feet, of feet running hard as they could go along one of the wide corridors off which the various cabins lay.

But was it the sound of just one pair of running feet? It was difficult to make out, but he thought it was not. Surely a second set of steps had been thundering after the first?

He took a rapid, fiercely penetrating look all round. And, yes. Yes, there were the light switches. He darted across and with a single sweep of his hand caused them all to blaze on.

The overpowering white glare of illumination sent searchlight beams down each of the wide corridors, and at the very end of the one nearest to him Ghote detected a door swinging to and fro. He set off at a fast run again, energy from somewhere overcoming all his fatigue.

There was silence ahead. Fleetingly, he wondered whether someone, some enemy—perhaps a spy after all, the killer spy—was waiting in the dark of one of the cabins listening to the thud of his own steps. Listening and ready to attack.

But he did not let himself hesitate. Tigga Kelkar was in the offices somewhere, that he knew. And there was someone else in here, too. Someone hostile. That he also knew almost as certainly.

Then, as he neared the end of the corridor where the light from the reception area hardly penetrated, he heard above the sound of his own thumping steps another noise. It was something like a squawk. A stifled scream. A sound of pain and desperation.

He thought it had come from the last cabin on the right, the one whose door he had detected swinging. He raced up to it and flung himself in at the open doorway.

The room in front of him was pitch dark. But by the faintest of lights coming from behind him, he thought he could see figures in a far corner. Two figures locked in a struggle.

"Stop!" he called out, loudly as he could. "Stop! Police!"

In the corner, the swaying movement of the struggle abruptly stilled. One figure separated from the other. It was, so far as he could see, that of a man. A tall, broadly powerful man.

Then, suddenly, with the force of a cannonball shot from a gun, the figure launched itself forward. Ghote crouched, tensing himself

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to receive the assault, determined to bear its brunt, to reach out, grab, and hold on.

But he had underestimated the strength and weight of his opponent. The man's rush, for all Ghote's readiness to take it, simply bowled him right over. On his back in the doorway, he shot out a hand and grabbed at the fellow's ankle. His frantic clutch did at least check the attacker. But in an instant his other foot came swinging back hard. A bare heel, hard as a hammer, caught Ghote fair and square on the nose.

Pain dazed and dazzled him. He felt the ankle he had grabbed wrenched from his grasp. Struggling to roll over, get to his knees, and heave himself up, he heard steps running furiously away along the corridor.

Once up, he set out in pursuit. But his head was dizzy from the blow to his nose and he found himself swaying and stumbling hopelessly. He came to a halt, leaning up against the wall, almost sobbing from pain, exhaustion, and anger.

A voice came from behind him in the gloom.

"Is it you, Inspector Ghote? What are you doing here? You saved my life, I think."

He turned, reluctantly opening his eyes wide.

It was Tigga. In the half light he could see that her kurta was ripped down half its length.

"Miss Tigga," he said, his voice curious and croaky. "Miss Tigga, are you all right?"

"Yes. Yes, I think I am. Now. But he was strangling me, Inspector. If you hadn't come at just that moment I would have passed out. I couldn't struggle any more."

Ghote took a few deep breaths. His swimming head began to clear.

"It was not your spy, was it?" he said.

Tigga gave a short, ironic laugh.

"No," she said. "No, it was some barefoot fellow who must have seen me coming in and followed me. I don't know who it could have been, but— But he had only one eye, Inspector. I saw his face close to mine. It was horrible. Horrible. That one eye, glaring at me."

Ghote heard her sobbing in the half darkness. He put a hand on her shoulder and patted it, comfortingly as he could. "Not to worry, not to worry any more," he said. "The fellow has gone now. And I think I know who it would be, also. Was there a peon here once by the name of Budhoo, who had one eye only?"

"No," the girl answered, catching back her sobs. "No, I don't

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

think—Wait, yes. Yes, there was. I joined here after he had been dismissed, but I remember people talking about him. A horrible man, they said."

"Yes," said Ghote, "a horrible man, and I am somewhat thinking the Cabin Killer, also."

"The Cabin Killer? But—"

"Yes, that is what I am thinking. You see, a peon in offices like this would get a very, very good idea where a Chivas Regal whisky was to be found, and as far as we have been able to make out the pilfering activities of his particular sort began about three years ago, which is just the time this Budhoo was retrenched from here. Mr. Das was telling me also that the fellow is always sleeping beside that little garden in the front of the building, so I think he would not be too difficult to find and put behind the bars."

"Inspector, that's marvelous. That's wonderful. I'll never make rude remarks about the police again. That's simply fantastic."

With the resilience of youth, Tigga was throwing off the terror of her recent experience like a puppy shaking off water after a run into the sea. Ghote heard her with pleasure.

For a moment.

And then a thought slid chilly into his mind.

"Well, Miss Tigga," he said, unable to keep out of his voice the sudden sinking he had felt, "that may or may not be good. It is depending on whether Assistant Commissioner Dabholkar and his team can find this fellow and whether he does turn out to be the man we were looking for when we have got him. But that is not at all the end of the matter, you know."

"Oh, a trial and all that," Tigga answered. "And no doubt you will get a confession, even if you have to beat it out of the brute."

Ghote ignored this major switch in attitude. He had something much more unpleasant to say to the girl than anything he might point out about that.

"No, Miss Tigga, it is not about the Cabin Killer that I am thinking."

"Then what—"

A long pause.

"Oh," she said at last. "Oh, yes. Yes, I see."

"Yes," Ghote said, "it is the killer of Mr. Billy Patel we have still to find, isn't it?"

"But— Oh, it was silly of me, Inspector. I somehow thought that because you had laid hands on that peon all our troubles were over."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"And they are not, are they, Miss Tigga? You were not finding any evidence of a spy from some other advertising firm just now, were you? You could not have done, when you really come down to it. No advertising campaign is so important that someone would kill over it."

Tigga did not answer for a little, but when she spoke it was in a noticeably subdued way.

"No, Inspector, you're right, of course. Advertising isn't that important. It isn't really a matter of life and death, even though here we sometimes act as if it was. But you're right. It was stupid of me. It wasn't a spy who killed poor Billy."

"No," Ghote said, sighing heavily. "No. It was no spy. And so we are back to where we were at the beginning, holding your most good friend, Mr. Roger Rajinder."

He had half expected another blistering attack at this, even sharp nails reaching for his face. But Tigga accepted what he had said in silence. And it was in silence that he escorted her down to his waiting car and drove her to her home.

"You are all right now?" he asked as he left her at the door of the flat.

"Yes. Yes, thank you, Inspector. I'm all right. Or, well, I will be after I've slept all night and a bit more."

"Yes. Goodbye."

He had not been able to think of anything else to say. "Good luck" would have meant "I hope your Roger is not guilty" and, though he did hope so, he knew that to voice even a hint of that would be to give the girl expectations with no prospect of justification.

Next morning, wearily summoning Roger Rajinder for yet another interview, he felt exactly as he had done the night before. The girl Tigga was delightful, full of life, full of confidence, pretty as could be, and somehow deserving of happiness. Of happiness in love, in the full *filmi* way even. And Roger seemed in every way right to provide that happiness—except that he was, on such evidence as there was, a murderer, however little he looked and behaved like one.

"Inspector," he burst out, eager as a schoolboy, the moment he was marched in, "did you find Tigga at the office last night? And could she get hold of anything to show that a spy killed poor Billy?"

"No. No spy," Ghote said.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Yes. Well, thinking things over in the night I realized that was pretty unlikely."

"However," Ghote said, "thanks to that enterprising young lady, we did somewhat advance matters."

He told Roger what had happened at Shalimar Associates the night before, capping his recital with news he had just learned himself, that the former peon, Budhoo, had been easily located, and put up a struggle when Dasher Dabholkar and his men made the arrest, and had been found in possession of evidence of the Cabin Killer's earlier thefts.

"But, Mr. Rajinder," Ghote concluded, "I cannot conceal from you that this leaves us in the matter of Mr. Billy Patel's death exactly where we were starting."

"Yes," said Roger. "Yes, I suppose it does. And it's no more use than it was before, I take it, me telling you that I simply did not do it."

"No. No more use."

"So where were we, Inspector? Ah, yes. You were just trying to break me down by telling me that Tigga was accepting the attentions of our good friend Shantaram Das, and I—"

He broke off.

"Inspector," he said after he had gazed into thin air for perhaps six or seven seconds. "Inspector, you dashed off to find Tigga before I had time to think about what you were saying. And, Inspector, now that I've thought of it again, I've remembered."

"What remembered?"

"What I did with that badge."

"Well, what were you doing with it?"

"Inspector, it was after the presentation for Cocopuffs. I went to Shantaramji to tell him I had seen everything cleared up, and I remember putting my badge down on his desk. I even made some joke about not needing it any more now we were sure the client had accepted our idea about Shivaji's sword—*Cut through the sales talk, get to the truth, Cocopuffs cannot be bettered.*"

"You put the badge on Mr. Das's desk," Ghote said impatiently. "And what then?"

"Then—and this is why I forgot all about it—Tigga came into Shantaramji's cabin and he at once offered her a lift home in his car and she accepted even though she had earlier agreed to take a ride on the back of my scooter. And, Inspector, I was so riled by this I burst out in anger, we had a huge row, and I walked out. It put the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

badge right out of my head. We only made up after the murder. It was when you yourself came into the office, as a matter of fact. She called to me and I asked if we were friends again."

"Yes," said Ghote, "I remember that."

He thought for a little.

"And you swear now," he said, "that you left that badge with your name on it on Mr. Shantaram Das's desk, and that you never saw it again?"

Roger looked painfully serious. "Yes, Inspector," he said. "That's the absolute truth."

Ghote stood up behind his desk.

"Then I think I must talk once more with Mr. Das," he said.

But he found at the Shalimar Associates offices that the plump and poetical new boss was not in. Tigga was there, however, and she told him that Shantaram Das, together with most of the firm's staff, had gone over to Marine Drive where, as the start of the new Cocopuffs campaign, a huge billboard was being erected with an immense Shivaji's sword cutting through the slogan in a swinging arc going right across the wide, traffic-whizzing road.

"It's going to be the biggest billboard Bombay has ever seen," she said. "It's terrific, really. Only someone like Billy Patel could ever have got all the permissions. The contacts he had were fantastic, just fantastic."

"And Mr. Das is there now, on Marine Drive?" Ghote asked sharply. "With all the other senior executives?"

"Yes. Supervising the construction, and I imagine hopping about like a cat on hot bricks in case it doesn't work."

"Well, I must see him at once."

He turned to go.

"Wait," Tigga said, "I'll go over there with you. It can be quite a confusion there, and I'll be able to get hold of Shantaramji for you. What's it all about, anyway?"

"It is just something I want to ask him only," Ghote said. "A matter of not much importance, but something I need cleared up."

Whatever he did, he was not going to give the girl any hope until he had something concrete to offer, even though he was ready now to consider Roger Rajinder no longer a suspect.

But his resolution lasted barely half the wiggling and weaving journey to the far end of Marine Drive, where the Cocopuffs billboard

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was going up. Tigga had sat beside him, looking so down at the mouth, that at last he could bear it no longer.

"Miss Tigga, I should not be telling you this, but in utmost confidence let me give you one hint only. Tonight Mr. Roger Rajinder could give somebody a ride home on his scooter."

The smile that slowly spread over Tigga's pretty face, like the sun appearing after a day of monsoon downpour and warming the fresh earth, was reward enough.

Nothing more was said by either of them until the car drew up where, stretching at extraordinary length over the wide sweep of the road, a huge new wood-constructed bridge had appeared.

"Isn't it great?" Tigga burst out. "Look, you can see the shape of Shivaji's sword even before all the panels are on at the front! It's going to be terrific, sweeping right across the road!"

"And it is for Cocopuff biscuits only?" Ghote asked.

"You bet. The greatest campaign Bombay has ever seen!"

Ghote sighed.

"Well, I suppose it is necessary," he said.

He began looking for Shantaram Das. But among the groups of busy Sikh carpenters, the laborers from the country districts in their brightly colored lungis, the crowds of idle onlookers, and the many Shalimar Associates executives, even down to the dapper accountant, Tarlok Singh, he failed altogether to find him.

"But where please is Mr. Das?" he asked Tigga sharply.

Tigga looked in her turn.

"Ah, there he is," she said after a moment. "Just behind the tower of the billboard."

Ghote saw the plump poet then. Directing. Ordering. In his element as the new boss of Shalimar Associates. The position he had murdered to reach.

"Shantaramji! Shantaramji!" Tigga called out excitedly. "Shantaramji, listen! Here's the Inspector again, and good news! Roger's going to be freed!"

Shantaram Das plainly heard her, despite the noise of the traffic streaming by at top speed and the jabber of all the voices. He took a long look at the pair of them as they began to make their way towards him.

And then he put his head down and charged away in the direction of the traffic-swirling road.

"Shantaramji!" Tigga called. "Come back! It's good—"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"He is escaping." Ghote ran forward, seething with fury at what he and the innocent, joyful Tigga had done to give the man warning.

There were people by the dozen between him and the heavy figure of the heir to Shalimar Associates. Ghote ducked and weaved and shoved past the gawping watchers, the carpenters, their assistants carrying long lengths of rough timber, and the jeans-clad staff from the firm.

Shantaram Das had come to a halt at the edge of the road where the last of the great morning influx of traffic into the Fort business area was tearing at breakneck speed. Ghote would catch him yet! Nimbly he jumped over an old beggar woman in a greasy sari, brushed aside a boy in a pair of torn khaki shorts, and plunged towards his quarry.

Then he saw the fat poet turn.

And, despite his bulk, the man swinging away from the curb in one lunging movement darted back the way he had come and in an instant had reached the foot of the supporting tower of the billboard and had heaved himself up into it.

Ghote swerved round toward him. "Way! Way!" he yelled. "Police! Police!"

He got little cooperation. But, he told himself, perhaps it did not matter. After all, Shantaram Das was trapped. He had got himself up onto all the criss-cross of bamboo and timber that formed one of the bases of the billboard, but he would have to come down sooner or later. The later the better, really. Given a little time, a whole circle of tough constables could be ringing the base of the scaffold.

Except—Ghote pushed and bullied his way nearer—except that the fat poet was steadily climbing still.

And then, looking up at the billboard and assessing it properly for the first time, Ghote saw that it already formed a rough and dangerous sort of bridge right across the traffic-whizzing highway. Shantaram Das could, perhaps—just perhaps—climb and clamber his way across it and excape before Ghote could make his way through the eight lanes of daredevil traffic and get to the far side first.

There was only one thing to do.

Ghote ducked his head, slid and weaved his way forward, reached the foot of the bamboo-and-timber tower, and began to climb. The unfinished structure swayed beneath the force of his thrusting legs. And as he reached up each time for a new handhold, he could feel

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the distant vibrations coming from where Shantaram Das, much heavier than himself, was climbing ahead of him.

Another heave or two, another hoist or two, and he had reached the tower's top. Ahead, appallingly frail, there stretched the narrow bridge itself, designed only to carry the huge shape of Shivaji's sword, much of it already in place in the form of great sheets of hardboard to his left. And Shantaram Das, he could see clearly now, was making his way quite rapidly forward along the slender, swaying, criss-crossed wooden tunnel, moving in a low crouch like a monkey, his white churidar-covered rear projecting behind him.

"Mr. Das! Mr. Das!" he called out. "Stop now! Come back! You cannot escape!"

But if the fugitive heard him above the noise of the clacketing, racing traffic below, he showed no sign.

Ghote resumed his pursuit.

Beneath, as he too progressed in a monkey crouch, his hands splinter-jabbed from the rough wood he snatched at with every move, he saw the tops of the cars and the yellow roofs of the taxis zooming under him with dazzling speed. In his nostrils he caught the reek of petrol fumes, choking and sickening.

And ahead Shantaram Das, despite his bulk, seemed to be progressing every bit as fast as he was himself. At this rate, the fellow would get to the ground on the far side enough ahead to make good his escape.

Ghote lunged yet farther forward for his next handhold, shut his mind to every risk, felt the frail structure sway ever more dangerously, and plunged on.

And the bobbing and thrusting white-clad rear in front of him grew bit by bit nearer.

Then, causing Ghote to grip the rough wood in a freezing of fear, the whole slender bridge suddenly canted hard to the right.

We will go over. —The thought planted itself in his mind like a neon-pulsing slogan.

Death. The cars below. The crash onto a roof. The helpless sliding off. The wheels over the body.

And then, through sweat-blinded eyes, he saw just what he had forecast for himself happening ahead. A heavy white shape tumbling rightwards. An arm flailing desperately. And then nothing. Nothing there at all.

But, below, the howls of a score of brakes jammed hard on. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

booming noises as one car after another cannoned into whatever was in front.

Ghote raised his head and dared to look down.

He could see Shantaram Das's sprawled white form on the black surface of the road just in front of the grey roof of an Ambassador.

So this is the end, he thought.

He heard himself, still clutching hard onto the rough timber, give a little bark of an ironic laugh. Live by the sword, die by the sword.

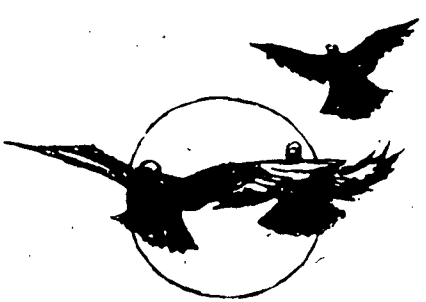
Well, Shantaram Das had hoped to live as well as Billy Patel by taking advantage of the sudden opportunity to get rid of him and have that convenient, built-up, ballooned-up figure of the Cabin Killer blamed. And he had died on Shivaji's sword when his hasty plan had proved not quite good enough, and his yet hastier attempt to involve Roger Rajinder—the badge he must have put in his own pocket and quietly slipped under Billy Patel's body with a sliding toe having, too, come unstuck.

Carefully, feeling decidedly sick, Ghote began making his way backwards along the narrow swaying tunnel behind Shivaji's sword. He reached the supporting tower and at last dropped down to the blessed safety of the firm ground.

Tigga was there at the foot of the tower waiting for him, her pretty face pale from shock.

"Hello," he said. "Hello, Miss Tigga. You know, it is very, very important to remember always that murder must not at all advertise."

Then blackness rose up in his head like a swooshing fountain and he saw no more.



LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CLASSIFIED MARKET PLACE

ELLERY QUEEN — published 13 times a year. CLASSIFIED AD rate is $2.95 per word — payable in advance — ($59.00 minimum). Capitalized words 40¢ per word additional. To be included in the next issue please send order and remittance to I. M. Bozoki, Classified Ad Manager, DAVIS PUBLICATIONS, INC., 380 Lexington Ave., New York, N.Y. 10017.

ADDITIONAL INCOME

HOW I made $900,000 the lazy way. Complete book $12.00 information. O.L. Walker, 1010 Montreat Road, Black Mountain, North Carolina 28711.

AUTHOR'S SERVICE

LOOKING for a publisher? Learn how you can have your book published, promoted, distributed. Send for free booklet, HP-5, Vantage Press, 516 W. 34th St., New York, NY 10001.

AVIATION

ANTIGRAVITY PROPULSION DEVICE! Free Brochure. RDA, Box 873, Concord, NC 28025.

BOOKS & PERIODICALS

WORLD's largest mystery specialist (30,000 volumes). No obligation search service. Send $2 for next 4 catalogues. Aardvarks Book Detectives, P.O. Box 15070, Orlando, FL 32858-5070.

PUBLISH YOUR BOOK! Join our successful authors. Publicity, advertising, beautiful books. All subjects invited. Send for fact-filled booklet and free manuscript report. Carlton Press, Dept. SMC, 84 Fifth Avenue, New York 10011.

FREE used mysteries catalogue. $1.25 paperbacks. Hardbound under $5.00. Choose from thousands. Murder By The Book, Box F-231, Akron, Ohio 44308.

DISCOVER A REMARKABLE NEW YOU! Wealth, health, success, happiness WILL be yours! Write P. F. T. Associates, Inc., Dept. 12, P.O. Box 216, Montrose, New York 10548.

FREE CATALOGUES, hardbacks, paperbacks. Search Service. Detective Mystery Booksearch, Box 15460, Orlando, Florida, 32808.

BOOKS & PERIODICALS—Cont'd

MYSTERY: Sherlock Holmes, Espionage, Science-Fiction, Reference & Bibliographies. FIRST EDITIONS. PAULETTE GREENE RARE BOOKS, 140 Princeton Road, Rockville Centre, NY 11570. New Catalogue $3.00.

FREE COMPUTER BOOK SEARCH. No obligation. Send wants, Mystery, Detective fiction. Or send $3 for next 5 catalogues. Tauscher Books, 102 Norwood, Bristol, VA 24201.

60,000 Science Fiction and Mystery Paperbacks, Hardcovers, Magazines. Free Catalogs! Grant Thiessen, Box Z-86A, Neche, ND 58265-0133.

THE SHERLOCK HOLMES CARTOON BOOK by Marc Bilgrey. Funny! 100 pages of cartoons based on the actual Holmes stories! Send $5.95 (includes shipping and postage) to: Cuckoo Bird Press, P.O. Box 501 Ansonia Station, New York, N.Y. 10023.

I LOVE A MYSTERY Newsletter for mystery fans. Send one 37¢ stamp for sample issue. P.O. Box 6009, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403.

FREE List of hardcover mysteries. Bimonthly catalogues list 8,000 titles each year. Dunn's Mysteries, 251 Baldwin Ave., Meriden, CT 06450.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

$1,000 Weekly Home Business Directory. Free Details. Name and address to: Box 1610-EQ, Darien, Connecticut, 06820-1610.

STAY HOME! MAKE MONEY ADDRESSING ENVELOPES. VALUABLE GENUINE OFFER. 20¢. Write Lindco, 3636-DA Peterson Ave., Chicago, IL 60559.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Classified Continued

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES—Cont'd

INTEREST Free Money! No Collateral! No Co-Signers! No Credit Checks! Write Now For Free Details! Grants-DPC384, Box 2298, Sandusky, OH 44870.

TAKE PICTURES for profit. Be your own boss. No experience required. Free information. Write: Photomoney, 14589H West 32nd, Golden, CO 80401.

YOUR FREE GOURMET MEAL!!! Incredible Multi-Level FOOD Program already shattering all MLM sales records!! Eat your way to Financial Independence! Free samples-Tapes-Details. Send $2.00 to defray shipping. Advantage, Box 473, Islip, N.Y. 11751.

BECOME SELF-EMPLOYED, no experience necessary. GUARANTEED SUCCESS. No inventory to maintain. START IMMEDIATELY. We fill orders on thousands of WARRANTED items. Receive complete wholesale package, FREE 10 DAY EXAMINATION, $25.00 (Refundable). West Coast Associates Ltd., 13562 Vanowen, Suite 18, Van Nuys, California 91405.

START your own profitable business at home. For Free Brochure: G&D Products, Box 117, 3645 28th St. SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49508.

GOOD MONEY! Weekly! Processing Mail! Free Ads, Supplies, Postage! Information? Rush stamped envelope! Foodmaster-DC3, Burnt Hills, NY 12027.

EARN money depositing special coupons at your supermarket(s) for consumer refund reports. Enclose stamped envelope. Consumer Services, B9-C, Orangeburg, NY 10962.

RECONDITION JUNK BATTERIES. $40,000 year spare-time home business. Huge demand. Easy, proven methods. Free information. Owen, 771F, Battle Ground, Washington 98604.

BLACKJACK PLAYERS! $100-/Hour Guaranteed. Test it yourself! Free info. "Simple System #1", 150 S. Glenoaks/Suite 9237, Burbank, CA 91510.

THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THE ZIP CODE; please use it when ordering merchandise from classified advertisements. You'll receive faster delivery.

EDUCATION & INSTRUCTION

UNIVERSITY DEGREES BY MAIL. Bachelors, Masters, Ph.D's . . . without attending classes! Inexpensive, fast. Free revealing details. Counseling, Box 389-EQ-3, Tustin California 92680.

UNIVERSITY DEGREES By Mail!!...Accredited Bachelors, Masters, PhD's. Free Facts Revealed. Careers-EQ, Box 470886, Tulsa, OK 74147.

GOVERNMENT SURPLUS

"GOVERNMENT SURPLUS" JEEPS $30.00! 5,000,000 Items! Complete information Your area. 1984 OFFICIAL DIRECTORY. $3.00 (Guaranteed). SURPLUS (A631), 4620 Wisconsin Northwest, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20016.

ARMY SURPLUS, many items. Pants $1.00, shirts $1.00, boots $10.00. Information $4.00, refund on first order. Lawton Surplus, Box 764, Lawton, OK 73501.

HYPNOTISM

FREE Catalog. Hypnotism, Hypnotic cassettes, sleep learning. Become the person you truly want to be. DLMH, Box 487, Anaheim, CA 92805.

INVENTIONS WANTED

EARN Royalties from your invention or new product idea. Nuprodux International, 1377 K St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20005.

LOANS BY MAIL

GET cash grants—from Government. (Never repay.) Also, cash loans available. All ages eligible. Complete information, $2 (refundable). Surplus Funds-DG, 1629 K St., Washington, DC 20006.

BORROW $30,000 without interest! All eligible. Repay anytime. Free details! Infohouse, 508-EQ, 533 Sutter, San Francisco, CA 94102.

BORROW By Mail! Signature Loans, No Collateral! Many More Unique Services Available. Write! Free Details! MBG-DPC384, Box 2298, Sandusky, OH 44870-7298.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Classified Continued

LOANS BY MAIL—Cont'd

$LOANS$ ON SIGNATURE TO—$100,000! Any purpose. Details Free. ELITE, Box 206-DG, East Rockaway, New York 11518.

BORROW $25,000 "OVERNIGHT." Any purpose. Keep indefinitely! Free Report reveals little-known sources/techniques! Success Research, Box 19739-SO, Indianapolis, IN 46219.

MEMORY IMPROVEMENT

INSTANT MEMORY . . . NEW WAY TO REMEMBER. *No memorization. Release* your PHOTOGRAPHIC memory. Stop forgetting! FREE information. Institute of Advanced Thinking, 845DP ViaLapaz, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.

MISCELLANEOUS

OLDTIME radio programs. Suspense drama, science fiction, comedies. Highly enjoyable tapes. Free catalogue. Carl D. Froelich, Route One, New Freedom, Pennsylvania 17349.

THOR, ODIN Live! Discover ancient European religion! Send $3 to: Wotan, 3125 19th St., 297J Bakersfield, CA 93301.

MONEYMAKING OPPORTUNITIES

$60.00 per Hundred securing-stuffing envelopes from home. Offer-details: Rush stamped self-addressed envelope. Imperial, P-460, X17410, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33318.

$750 WEEKLY POSSIBLE Mailing Circulars! Easy Guaranteed Income! No Experience Needed. Start Immediately! Free Details: PUBLICATIONS, Box 2096-D, Niagara Falls, NY 14301

GUARANTEED weekly income! Easy program mailing our circulars. Free supplies. Experience unnecessary. Start immediately. Write: Bond, Box 1147, Melbourne, FL 32901.

BUILD Multi-level FORTUNE. AMAZING NEW System. NO INVENTORY, SELLING or MEETINGS. Income GUARANTEE. DETAILS FREE. Bo-Mart Enterprises, Box #1417, Suite #B-41, Alexandria, VA 22313.

MONEYMAKING OPPORTUNITIES—Cont'd

NEED CASH? Make a Good Income in the comfort of your home! Information? 25¢ to: Wyant, Box 14490, Cleveland, Ohio 44114.

NEED HELP? Get $$MONEY$$, Success, Happiness, Free Car and much more! Write Today: AMERICAN HELP, 3909 South Boulevard, Suite 208DM, Charlotte, NC 28209.

"EARN THOUSANDS"! GUARANTEED PROCESSING STAMPED ENVELOPES! SPECTACULAR HOME PROFITS! START IMMEDIATELY! FREE SUPPLIES! FREE DETAILS! WRITE: MJG-DPG, AMBLER, PA 19002.

JOIN Mail-Stack, a new computerized international sponsoring club that quickly builds a multi-level downline organization for you. No Selling, No Inventory, No Bookwork, No High Quotas. Name, #10 sase: Mail-Stack, Inc., 1240 8th Street, P.O. Box 1227, Daytona Beach, FL 32017-5227.

CAN you stuff 1000 envelopes for $500.00 weekly? Send six 20¢ stamps: Blume, Post Office Box 460159, Garland, Texas 75046.

OF INTEREST TO ALL

PSYCHOANALYSIS UNAFFORDABLE? Professional researcher and staff specialize in the interpretation of dreams. Include information about age, sex, family background, and current life situation. Detailed personal analysis $5.00 per dream and SASE. Dream Research Associates, Dept. J, Box 914, Tuckerton, NJ 08087.

NEED HELP? Visa, MasterCard, Loans! No credit check! Guaranteed! AMERICAN CREDIT HELP, 3909 South Boulevard, Suite 208DH, Charlotte, NC 28209.

NEED SOLUTIONS? Privacy, Divorce, Taxes, Degrees, Money, Jobs. New ideas! Free book catalog. Eden, 11623 Slater, Box 8410-A, Fountain Valley, CA 92728.

PERSONAL

SINGLE? Meet that special person—anywhere! Very low fees. DATELINE, 316 Fifth Ave., New York 10001. (202) 328-1300 or (513) 821-4600 or (612) 888-1240.

SINGLE? Widowed? Divorced? Nationwide introductions! Hundreds of sincere members! All Ages! Free information! Write: Identity, Box 315-DT, Royal Oak, Michigan 48068.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Classified Continued

PERSONAL—Cont'd

UNIVERSITY DEGREES BY MAIL. Bachelors, Masters, Ph.D.'s . . . without attending classes! Inexpensive, fast. Free revealing details. Counseling, Box 389-DP3, Tustin, California 92680.

SOPHISTICATED SCANDINAVIANS, all ages, seek enlightened correspondence, friendship, marriage. Details: Scannaclub, Dept. CO3, POB 4, Pittsford, NY 14534.

MEN! Fun-loving, pretty girls want to meet you. Four different clubs. Free information! Write: Merit, Box 74758-DD, Los Angeles, CA 90004.

ORIENTAL Ladies. Faithful, traditional, affectionate. Thousands seeking marriage, now! Cherry Blossoms, Box 1021DA, Honokaa, Hawaii 96727.

LONELY? Want nationwide friends? Either sex. New lists monthly. Enclose stamp. Exciting, Box 324, Ontario, CA 91761.

20 CIGARETTES only 26¢! All popular blends. Don't burn your dollars—SAVE THEM! Send SASE for amazing details. TARGET, Box 583-EQ. Pittsburgh, PA 15230.

BEAUTIFUL GIRLS SEEK FRIENDSHIP AND MARRIAGE. American—Mexican—Philippine—European. Photo selection FREE! Latins, Box 1716-DD, Chula Vista, CA 92012.

PHOTOGRAPHY—PHOTO FINISHING

SAVE HUNDREDS OF DOLLARS!!!! Make your own S & M Densitometer. Send $5.00 for detailed drawings and instructions. A must for successful photography in your darkroom. Order direct: S & M Instruments, Dept. EQ, 380 Lexington Ave., New York, NY 10017.

RADIO & TELEVISION

CABLE TV DESCRAMBLERS and CONVERTERS. PLANS and PARTS. Build or Buy. For information send $2.00. C&D Electronics, P.O. Box 21, Jenison, MI 49428.

RADIO MYSTERIES

CBS Mystery Theatres—424 Hours on Cassettes, Reels or 8-Tracks. Superb Quality! Catalog $1.00. P.O. Box 3509-AN, Lakeland, FL 33802.

RECORDS, TAPES & SOUND EQUIPMENT

FREE Promotional albums, concert tickets, stereos, etc. Information: Barry Publications, 477 82nd Street, Brooklyn, NY 11209.

SALESMEN-DISTRIBUTORS

LET us build your downline 5 deep 5 wide. Multi-level Foods. Membership only $50. One-time Fee. Downline Sponsoring Association, 2665 East 3210 South, Salt Lake City, Utah 84109.

SONGWRITERS

POEMS WANTED. Songs recorded and published. Radio-TV promotions. Broadway Music Productions, Box 7438-DA, Sarasota, FL 33578.

STAMP COLLECTING

FREE gifts with trial selection of Worldwide approvals for new and intermediate collectors. Loring, 2767 Marion Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458.

WORLDWIDE Stamps—25 for 25¢ with approvals. Pay for what you keep, return remainder. Hixson Enterprises, Dept. C, Box 2089, Satellite Beach, FL 32937.

TRAVEL/TOURS

UNIQUE MYSTERY TOURS. In search of Agatha Christie, Sherlock Holmes, Lord Peter Wimsey and more! Murder weekend at English manor! Meet mystery authors! Free brochures: ICTS, 4133 Taylor, San Diego, CA 92110. Telephone toll-free: 800-428-7825 ex 41 (USA) or 800-428-7824 ex 41 (California).

UNUSUAL BOOKS

THE INTELLIGENCE LIBRARY: Many unique books & official manuals on RESTRICTED subjects—Bugging, Wiretapping, Locksmithing, Covert Investigation, & MUCH MORE. Free brochures, MENTOR, DP, 135-53 No. Blvd., Flushing, N.Y. 11354.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEXT ISSUE...

14 *NEW* stories—including

ISAAC ASIMOV (about the Black Widowers)

PATRICIA MOYES (about flowers for the dead)

CLARK HOWARD (about the last private eye)

PETER LOVESEY (about Arabella's answer)

M. F. K. FISHER (about a young weatherman)

TIM HEALD (about Simon Bognor)

JANWILLEM van de WETERING (a tasty tidbit)

RUTH RENDELL (about Hare's house)

EDWARD D. HOCH (about Rand)

ELEANOR SULLIVAN ..... *Editor*
KAREN A. PRINCE ..... *Associate Editor*
RALPH RUBINO ..... *Corporate Art Director*
GERARD HAWKINS ..... *Associate Art Director*
MARIANNE WELDON ..... *Associate Designer*
CARL BARTEE ..... *Director of Manufacturing*
CAROLE DIXON ..... *Production Manager*
MICHAEL DILLON ..... *Circulation Director, Retail Marketing*
KATHY TULLY-CESTARO *Circulation Manager, Subscriptions*
PAUL PEARSON ..... *Newsstand Operations Manager*
IRIS TEMPLE ..... *Director, Subsidiary Rights*
BARBARA BAZYN ..... *Permissions & Contracts Manager*
IRENE BOZOKI ..... *Classified Advertising Manager*
JAMIE FILLON ..... *Advertising Manager*
WILLIAM F. BATTISTA ..... *Advertising Director*

JOEL DAVIS
President & Publisher

LEONARD F. PINTO
Vice President & General Manager

CAROLE SINCLAIR
Vice President Marketing & Editorial

LEONARD H. HABAS
Vice President Circulation

FRED EDINGER
Vice President Finance

Advertising Sales Offices

NEW YORK	CHICAGO	LOS ANGELES
212-557-9100	312-346-0712	213-785-3114

Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine, Vol. 83, No. 3, Whole No. 489, March, 1984. Published 13 times a year, every 28 days, by Davis Publications, Inc., at $1.75 a copy. Jan.–Dec. issues, $1.95 Special Mid-Dec. issue. Annual subscription $19.50 in U.S.A. and possessions; $23.00 elsewhere, payable in advance and in U.S. funds. Allow 6 to 8 weeks for change of address. Editorial and Executive Offices, 380 Lexington Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10017. Subscription orders and mail regarding subscriptions should be sent to P.O. Box 1930, Marion, Ohio 43305. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY. and at additional mailing offices. Canadian third-class postage paid at Windsor, Ontario.

© 1984 Davis Publications, Inc., all rights reserved. Protection secured under the Universal Copyright Convention and the Pan American Copyright Convention. ELLERY QUEEN'S MYSTERY MAGAZINE® is the registered trademark of Ellery Queen. Printed in U.S.A. Submission must be accompanied by self-addressed stamped envelope. The Publisher assumes no responsibility for unsolicited manuscripts.

POSTMASTER: Send form 3579 to Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine, P.O. Box 1930, Marion, Ohio 43305. In Canada return to 628 Monmouth Rd., Windsor, Ontario N8Y3L1. ISSN: 0013-6328

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GET AWAY WITH MURDER.

GET $118.40 WORTH OF MACDONALD, CHARTERIS, JOHNSTON AND 9 OTHER GREAT WRITERS FOR $1.

As a new member of The Detective Book Club, you'll make your first big killing on our introductory offer: 12 of the best recently-published mysteries for $1.

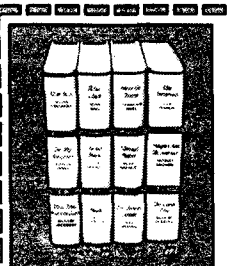
You'll savor baffling murder cases, international intrigue, innocent people caught in a web of evil, terror touched by the supernatural. All served up with the intricate plotting, bizarre twists and gripping action that are the hallmarks of the great modern masters.

Bought in a bookstore, they'd cost $118.40. But as a new member of The Detective Book Club, you get all 12 tales shown on the left for only $1...in four handsome, hardbound, triple-volumes.

As a member, you'll get the Club's free monthly Preview, which describes in advance each month's selections. They're chosen by the Club's editors, who select the best from more than 400 mysteries published each year. You may reject any volume before or after receiving it, within 21 days; there's no minimum number of books you must buy. And you may cancel your membership at any time.

When you accept a club selection, you get three complete, full-length detective novels in one hardcover triple-volume like the ones shown on this page for only $8.95. That's about $2.98 per mystery—at least $5 (and sometimes $6 or $7) less than just one costs in the publishers' original editions.

Recent selections have included new thrillers by top names like those featured here, plus Len Deighton, Dick Francis and many others. Start enjoying the benefits of membership in The Detective Book Club. Send no money now. You'll be billed later for your 12 mysteries. Send the coupon today to: The Detective Book Club, Roslyn, N.Y. 11576.



Please enroll me as a member and send me at once my 4 triple-volumes shown here, containing 12 mysteries. I enclose no money now. I may examine my books for one week, then will either accept all four volumes for the special new member price of only $1 plus shipping, or return them and owe nothing.

As a member, I will receive free the Club's monthly Preview, which describes my next selection. I will always have at least ten days to reject any selection by returning the form provided. I may return any book sent for full credit within 21 days. For each monthly triple-volume I keep, I will send you only $8.95, plus shipping. I understand I may cancel my membership at any time.

3-FR
D23M5S

THE DETECTIVE BOOK CLUB, ROSLYN, N.Y. 11576.

Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

PUBLISHED BY
WALTER J. BLACK, INC.
ESTABLISHED 1923

Note: Members accepted in U.S.A. and Canada only; offer slightly different in Canada.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DETECTIVERSE

SON OF OWL AND PUSSYCAT

by ELIZABETH FRAZE ARNDT

The Owl and the Pussycat went to sea
In a classy new pea-green ship;
They got underway and were gone in a day,
With never a stumble or slip.
The Owl had relieved of a month's receipts
The Bank where he formerly clerked,
And the Pussycat, she did similarly
With the dough from the Shop where she worked, she worked,
From the Bakery Shop where she worked.

They sailed away for a month and a day
To a Land which does not extradite,
And began to play, in a runcible way,
On a Wheel that ran day and night;
Then they drank Champagne in the sun and the rain,
And ate Truffles and Caviar,
And with dance and song they carried on
Till the last of the money was gone, was gone,
Till, alas, the money was gone.

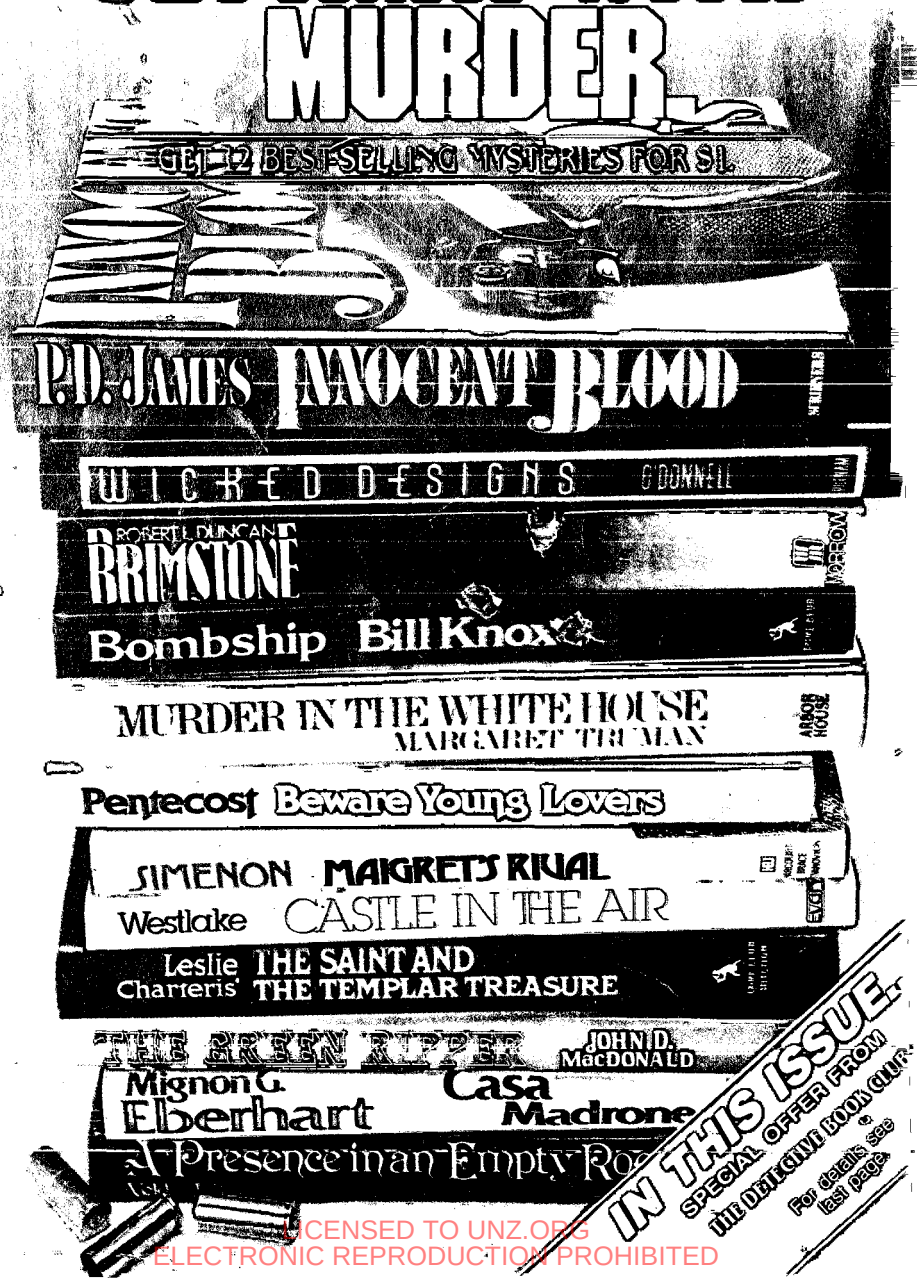
Now the Owl and the Pussycat go to sea
Each day in a pea-green boat,
And they live on fish, but they never wish
For the Bank and the Shop remote;
For they had their Sing and they had their Fling,
And they know they ought to repent,
But they giggle and laugh as small beer they Quaff,
And consider the money well spent, well spent,
And they've never regretted a cent, a cent,
And they've never regretted a cent.

© 1984 by Elizabeth Fraze Arndt.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

GET AWAY WITH MURDER...

GET 12 BESTSELLING MYSTERIES FOR $1.



IN THIS ISSUE...

SPECIAL OFFER FROM THE DETECTIVE BOOK CLUB

For details see last page

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED